

Home Computing WEEKLY

An Argus Specialist Publication

July 12-18, 1983

No. 19

38p

INSIDE

Behind the scenes at English Software

Great games to type in for:
TI-99/4A,
Spectrum,
Dragon, ZX81

Software reviews for:
Lynx, TI-99/4A,
VIC-20, BBC,
Atari, Oric,
Dragon,
Jupiter Ace,
Spectrum

Create more characters with your VIC-20
Drawing with the Oric

Best sellers: charts for VIC-20, ZX81, Spectrum, Dragon

CRASH FAKED IN SPECTRUM RAID

COMPUTERS have been fished out of the Thames — days after armed raiders got away with a £390,000 haul.

They staged a car crash to lure the security guard from a London warehouse.

He was inside the TNT warehouse, on the Cranford Lane Industrial Estate, Hornsey, chatting to the estate manager when they heard a crash outside.

A car with a girl at the wheel and a main passenger had crashed into dustbins.

The two men went to their aid — and found themselves facing a shotgun and a handgun held by two other raiders who had been waiting nearby.

One of them said: "Blow them away... it will save time later."

In fact no shots were fired and, as the car drove off at high speed, the guard and the manager were forced back into the warehouse.

They were made to get into the back of a truck which was then reversed against a wall, trapping them.

Meanwhile the three robbers loaded up two other TNT trucks with computers — mostly 48K Spectrums in boxes of 10, plus ZX81s and some software. The trucks, both orange coloured Ford Cargos, were later found abandoned.

The two trapped men shouted and banged on the sides of the truck until they were heard by passers-by and released.

The haul, worth £390,000, belongs to Prism, Sinclair's sole distributor in this country. It was

Continued on page 3



New Ataris — see inside

An amazing collection of exciting games for VIC20 and ZX Spectrum —

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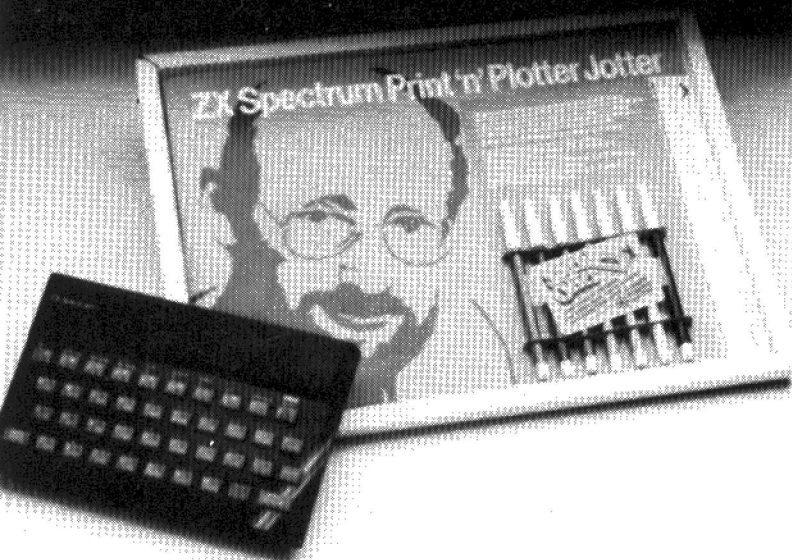
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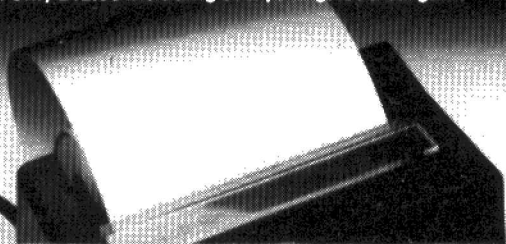
And there's another bonus, because each page contains 24 User-definable grids — 2400 per pad!

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Continued from front page
 in the warehouse awaiting despatch to retailers throughout the country.

Prism's deputy managing director Terry Brown said: "It means there won't be as many retailers holding stocks as there could be."

"We have got to try and get extra stocks so we won't build up a lead time. My advice to customers is to shop around or go back to the store later."

He said: "They loaded up the lorries very inefficiently. They left at least 2,000 computers behind when they could have taken everything that was in the warehouse."

Prism, which was insured for the loss, distributes to most UK retailers, excluding a handful of large chains, like W.H. Smith, Greens and John Menzies, which are supplied direct by Sinclair Research.

Five days later £1,730 worth of computers were found submerged in the Thames in Buckinghamshire by two boys out fishing.

There were 13 Spectrums, a ZX81 and a single power pack in two plastic bags. All were ruined.

Police are checking to see if there is any connection and an officer said: "Things are developing."

The Oric collection

Home Computing Weekly contributor Vince Apps has just brought out a collection of programs to keep Oric owners busy.

The Oric-1 Program Book contains 50 program listings which, according to the publishers, will allow those dedicated enough to type them all in to run an obstacle course, protect six cities from missile attack, save a maiden from a dark knight, draw graphs, weave webs, have a firework display, peek into the Oric's memory...

The book costs £6.50 direct from the publishers.

Phoenix Publishers, 14 Vernon Road, Bushey, Herts

Home Computing WEEKLY

News	5,7,9
TI-99/4A program	11
Save Miss Muffet from the spider	
Software reviews	13
Programs that teach you to put two and two together	
Software reviews	14
Versions of the classics	
Spectrum program	17
The fate of the fleet depends on you	
Dragon program	21
Prepare those plasma bolts	
Software reviews	23
These games are all up in the air	
VIC-20 programming	25
Reformed characters	
Software reviews	29
Messing about with your micro	
Oric-1 programming	30
You too can be quick on the draw	
Spectrum software reviews	33
Aliens on the warpath	
VIC-20 software reviews	35
New games you could play	
ZX programs	36
Train your brain	
Best sellers	38
U.S. Scene	38
Letters	41
Profile: English Software	43

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Argus Specialist Publications Ltd.
 145 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0EE. 01-437 1002

Home Computing Weekly is published on Tuesdays. Distribution by Argus Press Sales and Distribution Ltd, 12-14 Paul Street, London EC2A 4JS. Printed by Alabaster Passmore & Sons Ltd, of London and Maidstone, Kent. Design and origination by MM Design and Print, 145 Charing Cross Rd., London WC2H 0EE

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 12 pages of the best programs for 16K ZX81
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 clearly 01-789 8546
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Dragon crosses the ocean

The Dragon-32, which was launched in the UK only last August, is now to be sold across the Atlantic.

Dragon Data has just signed an agreement with New Orleans-based company Tano to market the Dragon in the USA, Central and South America and the Caribbean.

Dragon Data, Kenfig Industrial Estate, Margam, Port Talbot, West Glamorgan

Cartridge price cuts

The retail price of Thorn EMI software cartridges for the VIC-20 and Atari 400/800 micros can be expected to fall, now that Thorn has cut the price it charges dealers.

Cuts of £5 per cartridge on the trade price will probably mean that retail prices will fall to under £30.

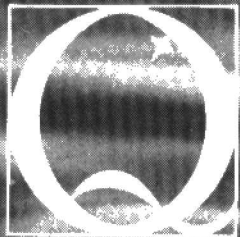
Thorn EMI, Upper Saint Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9ED

LATE NEWS

Oric joins price cutters

Price of both Oric computers have been slashed. The 48K model has been cut by £30 to £139.95, and the 16K version returns to its launch price of £99.95. Oric said that 80,000 Oric-1s have been sold in the UK and Europe, and a TV campaign was starting.

Buyers will also get a £40 voucher towards the cost of the Oric four colour printer plotter.



QUEST FOR ANY SPECTRUM

SIMPLY THE BEST

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HOW GOOD ARE YOU? Take up the "BLACK HOLE" challenge NOW and find out. Send £5.50 to QUEST, 119 THE PROMENADE, CHELTENHAM, GLOS GL50 1NW to receive your copy of "BLACK HOLE" by return first class post together with a membership number entitling you to discount on our forthcoming blockbusting software.

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THE TOP 6 SCORERS AT THE END OF JUNE ARE:

RUSSELL CAPEL	2530	IAN GARLINGE	1847
MRS K. BURNETT	2019	STEVE EDWARDS	1670
DAVID BAXTER	1998	T. SWIFT	1513

Atari games for other computers

Atari is converting its computer games to run on other micros, starting with cartridges for the TI-99/4A, VIC-20 and Commodore 64.

The first three — Pac Man, Centipede and Defender — will be on sale by the end of the year. More Atari cartridges are also due out soon.

Steve Gerber, 37, Atari's European software development director, who has just arrived at the company's UK base in Slough, explained the new policy.

He said: "It was the Warner Corporation (Atari's owners, who made the final decision. We had been trying to persuade them to do this for some time.

"After all, if you're good at making software, why limit yourself to one machine?"

But would this mean people may choose to buy other computers? Mr Gerber said: "If you found the best software for, say, the VIC, was from Atari, would you not just buy the Atari?"

More adaptations would be coming for the BBC micro, Dragon and the Spectrum, all on tape instead of cartridges.

He said: "We are also about to launch a UK product written by a UK author. This kid just walked in the door with a dynamite game."

The Software Publishing Group was also on the lookout for more UK-written software which would, if suitable, be marketed in America as well as other countries where Atari's are sold.

New software for cartridges due out this year:

- Pole Position, a grand prix motor racing game costing £29.99 and on sale in September



Janice Gash, 25, with the new 800XL home computer from Atari

- RealSports Tennis, in the ships this month, uses the same rules as real tennis — and the players even change ends after games. Price: £19.99

- AtariWriter, a word processing program which, says Atari, offers features usually found in expensive software.

- Games for children based on Walt Disney characters and cartoon films

Atari also showed its new computers and peripherals for the first time in the UK. Prices have not

yet been decided, but they are due here this year.

Details were in last week's Home Computing Weekly, but they included the 16K RAM 600XL and 64K 800XL home computers. They are compatible with existing software and, unlike the present models, have BASIC built in. The top of the range 1450XLD, which is to go on sale here next year, has a built-in dual density, double sided 5¼in disc drive.

Other new products include three printers — the 1020, using ballpoint pens in 4½in paper rolls; the 1025 80-column dot matrix printer; and the 1027 letter quality printer running at a claimed 20 characters per second.

There is also a re-styled 1010 program recorder, 1050 disc drive, a module for the CP/M 2.2 operating system — used for much business software — which also adds 64K of RAM and switchable 40 or 80 column video output, and a box called The Expander with slots for eight expansion cards and two RS-232C and one Centronics interface.

The Expander for the new XL computers only is designed to accept products from other manufacturers.

Fire bugs cause £10,000 damage

Fire-raisers caused a £10,000 blaze at a leading software and add-on company. And one theory is that they were teenagers angry at not finding any money.

The man who called the emergency services — a quantity surveyor working late in an adjoining office — has been thanked with a bottle of Scotch and the offer of a free meal.

The gift was from Roy Backhouse, managing director of Fuller Micro Systems, based in central Liverpool.

Mr Backhouse said: "Police think it was teenagers looking for money. They smashed the front window to get in at about midnight on Saturday.

"They couldn't find any money — so they set fire to the place. The fire brigade believe they set fire to a wastepaper basket."

Among the property, all insured, which was damaged was software, desks and files. A printer and a terminal were damaged by smoke, but the company's ICL computer was on another floor and not affected.

All 14 people employed by Fuller worked over the weekend to ensure orders were kept up to date.

Mr Backhouse said: "Even though we managed to salvage a lot of test gear it still stinks of smoke.

"It's an absolute pain that anyone could be so senseless. There was a lot of blood, so they must have cut themselves getting in.

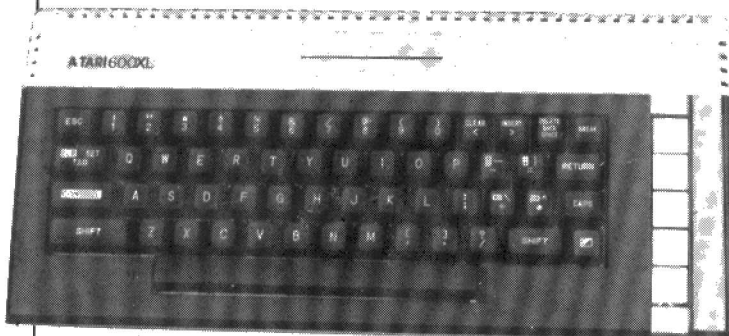
"We probably would have lost the whole place but for a guy working late who heard the glass being broken and called the police."

The fire affected only the ground floor of Fullers, which includes showroom, reception area and repairs and servicing.

Microdrives 'imminent'

The launch of the long-awaited Microdrives mass storage devices is now imminent, according to a Sinclair Research official.

Sinclair has said little about the Microdrives, except that they are likely to cost around £50 and will need an interface



Atari's new 600XL computer

GREAT NEW SOFTWARE DEAL



HOT-SHOTS

The latest list of best selling titles drawn from our database covering national trends.

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Shamus	£29.95
Miner 20'49er	£29.95
Preppie	£21.99

B.B.C.

Planetoid	£9.95
Killer Gorilla	£7.99
Moon Raider	£7.99
Rocket Raid	£9.95
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COMMODORE 64

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Pakacuda	£5.99
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SPECTRUM

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Arcadia	£5.50

ZX81

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PREDICTION

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ZX computing US-style

The ZX81 and Spectrum that we all know and love have undergone a dramatic transformation on their way to the USA.

The ZX81 becomes the Timex Sinclair (TS) 1500, and features a silver case, Spectrum-like keyboard and 16K of RAM built in all for around £45.

Timex also sells mini-cartridges to plug into the expansion slot at the back of the machine.

The 48K Spectrum becomes the TS2048. It too has a silver case, plus a special compartment for cartridges and a hole in the side for a joystick.

It has five new commands: ON ERROR GOTO; RESET; FREE, which tells you how much memory is left; STICK, which controls the joystick; and SOUND, which activates a three-channel synthesiser.

And the TS2048 can also switch into a second graphics mode giving 64 characters per line. It's selling for the equivalent of around £135.

A to Z of software

When you've been from Arcadia to Zip Zap and Zzoom, what do you do for an encore? The two Zx are the titles of Imagine's first two games for the 48K Spectrum, and they'll be in the shops soon.

Zip Zap puts you in control of a defective robot, trying to gain the safety of a Tele Portal in the face of opposition from waves of aliens.

Its author is a new arrival at Imagine, Ian Weatherburn, who joined the company in April. But Eugene Evans' position as 17-year-old programming prodigy is safe — Ian is all of 19.

Zzoom is a game with a more familiar theme — rescuing marooned refugees from an enemy intent on wiping them all out. It was written by the grand old man of the company, 36-year-old John Gibson, author of Molar Maul.

Artistic advice on the games

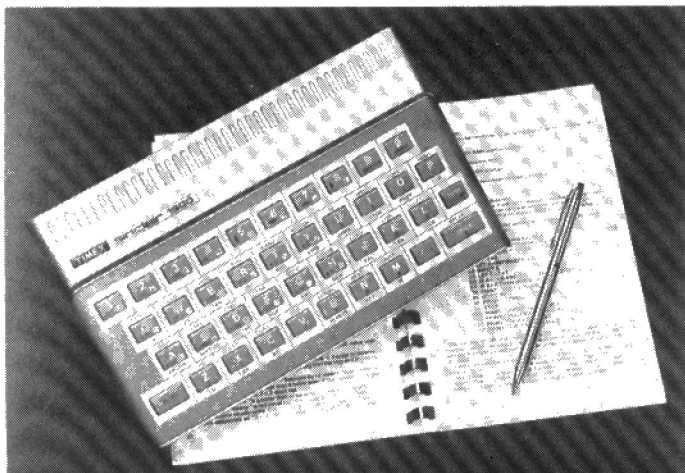
was provided by Gary McNamara, 18, and Steve Blower, 33, from Imagine's very own studio, Studio Sting.

Both games will be packaged in Imagine's new-style cassette boxes. Not only that, but the Zzoom boxes even have a Latin inscription — Nomen Ludi, or "the name of the game" to you. They'll sell for £5.50, like the rest of Imagine's range.

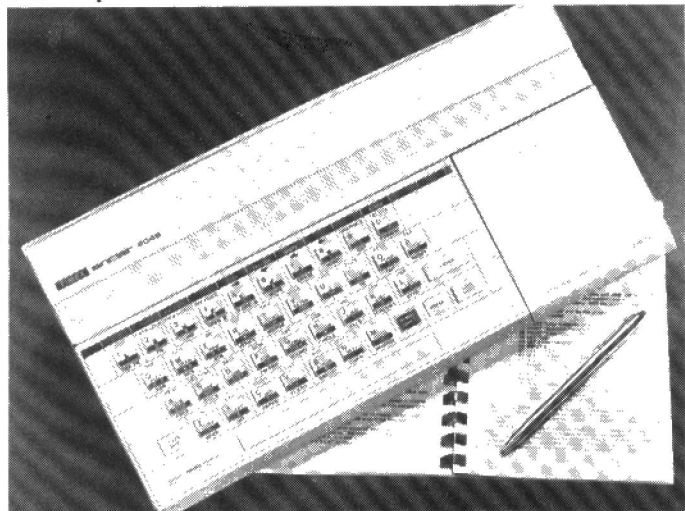
But there's no need to feel inferior if you don't understand Latin — neither does Imagine. The motto was translated for them by the Classics department at Merchant Taylors' School, Liverpool.

And the answer to the original question could be that the company plans to start again from A. Launched along with Zip Zap and Zzoom is a version of Arcadia for the Commodore 64, re-written and enhanced by Eugene Evans himself.

Imagine, Masons Buildings, Exchange Street East, Liverpool L2 3PN



The X81 plus...



...And there's a 48K Spectrum in there somewhere

Raider upgrader

Arcade Software says that Raider of the Cursed Mine, the Spectrum game it launched at the Earls Court Computer Fair, met with such a good response that it's now bringing out a new improved version.

This version, which was being duplicated at the end of last week, will have grade difficulty

levels and the option of joystick control.

And if you manage to get past level 30 and escape from the mine, you'll be rewarded with a picture of the outside world — complete with moon, stars, trees and a house.

Anyone who bought the earlier version of Raider can exchange it for the new one.

Arcade Software, Technology House, 32 Chiselhurst Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 0DG

You could be on our pages

We welcome programs articles and tips from our readers.

PROGRAMS should, if possible, be computer printed to a width of 48 characters (use a new ribbon) and/or sent on cassette. Check carefully that they are bug-free. Include details of what your program does, how it works, variables you have used and hints on conversion.

ARTICLES on using home computers should be no longer than 2,000 words. Don't worry about your writing ability — just try to keep to the style in HCW. Articles most likely to be published will help our readers make better use of their micros by giving useful ideas, possibly with programming examples. We will convert any sketched illustrations into finished artwork.

TIPS are short articles, and brief programming routines which we can put together with others. Your hints can aid other computer users.

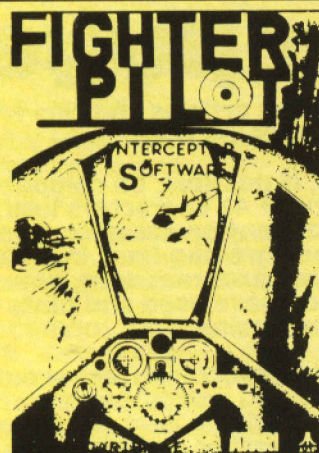
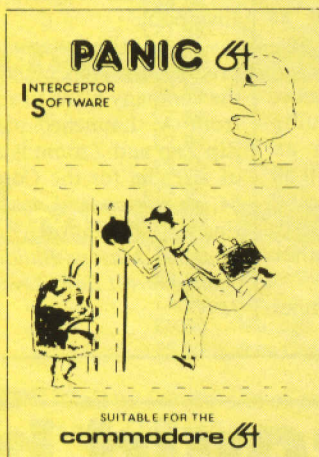
Competitive rates are paid.

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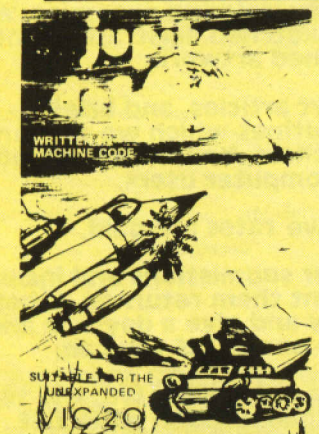
Paul Liptrot, Home Computing Weekly, 145 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0EE

6 NEW GAMES FOR YOUR

commodore 64



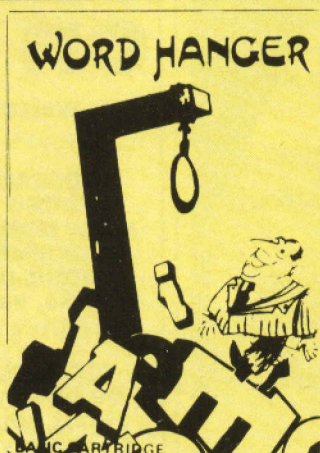
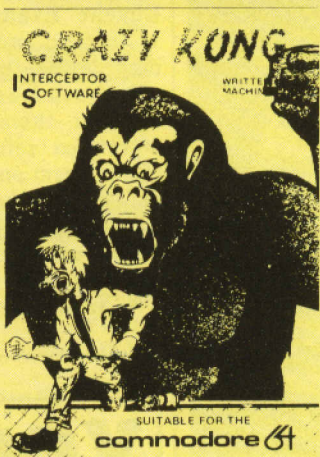
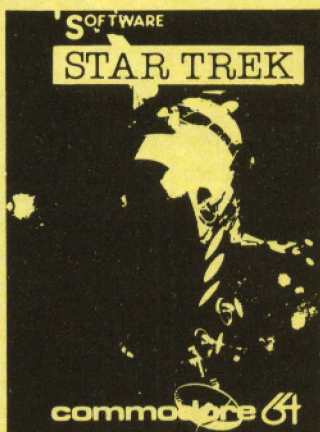
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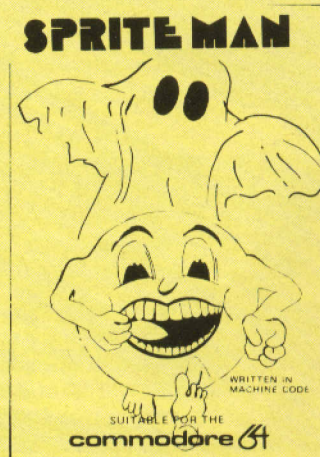
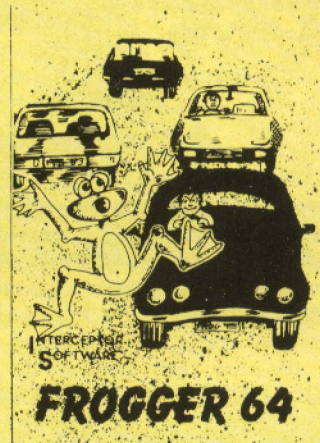
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The basic version costs £60 and the free-standing version costs £80.

Abacus Marketing, Abacus House, 60 Barcoursne, Worcester WR1 1JA



The Micro Tidy tidies up your micro

ZX computers get a voice

You may not be able to talk to your ZX81 or Spectrum, but it will at least be able to talk to you, using the ZXS Speech Synthesiser from Timedata.

At the heart of the ZXS is the SP-0256 chip, which produces basic speech sounds called allophones. The ZXS can be programmed to combine these allophones to produce a wide range of English words and some

foreign ones.

The result can be fed either to a normal audio amplifier, or to the loudspeaker in a sound box such as Timedata's ZXM.

Looking rather like a 16K RAMpack, the ZXS has an edge connector to allow other devices to be piggybacked on to it.

Timedata reckons that at £32.50, it's the cheapest synthesiser around.

Timedata, 16 Hemmells, High Road, Laindon, Basildon, Essex SS15 6ED



Timedata's ZXS — voice for ZX computers

Give micro addicts a fair dealer

It's a hard life being a computer addict. You sit at home typing, or reading specialist magazines like this one, and then — you spot an ad for a new computer shop near your home.

Excited at the prospect of trying out that new joystick, or that new game with the super smooth graphics, or just a chat with a fellow enthusiast, you rush out at once. You return home shortly afterwards, downcast. The shop was a washout — no new programs, no joysticks, and a sales assistant who might as well have been selling double glazing.

Could this be you? Judging by the letters in the computer magazines, which tell of one sob story after another, I should think it quite likely.

○ ○ ○ ○

What on earth is the point of computer shops if people like myself can't try out new products? When even programs can cost around £8 each, us teenagers (who after all constitute the majority of home computers enthusiasts, or so the media would have us believe) with limited budgets can't afford to buy a bad program.

It has been debated, ad nauseam, whether or not software libraries or the Buy and Try scheme provide a solution. If our local computer shops were doing their job, this debate would be unnecessary. Any program could be tested before being bought.

Out of 12 well-advertised stores and specialist shops in my area, not one stocks what the ads say it should, or anything like a decent supply of software. I live in Harrow, but I buy my software from a shop in Exeter, which is helpful, knowledgeable, and gives very fast service (four days after ordering three programs, they arrived, with an apology for the delay!)

○ ○ ○ ○

Of course, events such as the Microfairs and the Home Computer Fair fulfill the same function. But they're only held from time to time, and not everyone can afford to go to them.

Software companies themselves could help, by giving clearer indications of what the program is like, what language it is written in, etc, so that customers are less likely to buy a program they don't want.

○ ○ ○ ○

For example, I saw the ad for Ultimate's two games, Psst and Jet Pac, and decided against buying them. I then saw them at the ZX Microfair, and have since bought them both!

Software houses do themselves as well as their customers a great disservice by advertising their programs in a misleading way, as so many (and I don't mean Ultimate now) do. For an arcade game to be exciting and fast enough, it really needs to be in machine code — a fact generally accepted by everyone but the smaller software companies. But once bitten by a misleading ad, buyers will be twice shy of going to the same company again.

In HCW 15, news of GOSH — the Group of Software Houses — was announced. I hope that GOSH's members will take note of this plea for improvement. Otherwise, I fear that the sudden expansion of the software market will stop, and the trend may reverse. Bad dealers and software must not be allowed to be spoil it for everyone else.

David Lester
Student
Pinner, Middlesex

● This space is for you to sound off about the micro scene, to present bouquets or to hurl brickbats. Share your views by sending them to Paul Liptrot, Opinion, Home Computing Weekly, 145 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0EE. Please include your occupation and your interest in computing

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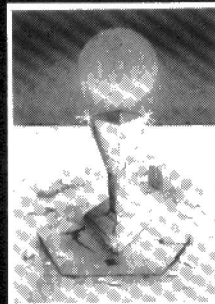
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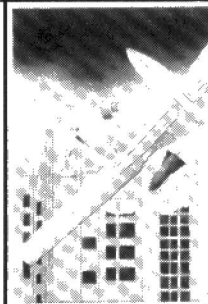
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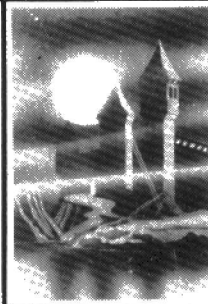
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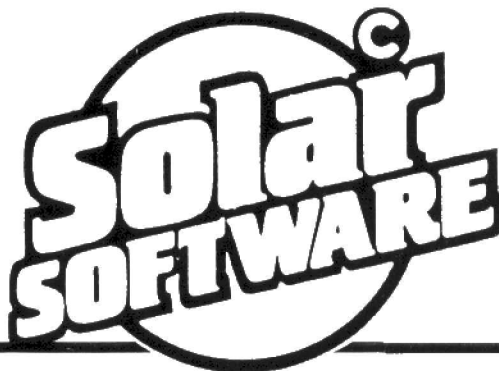
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HCW19

Can you save Miss Muffet from the spider?

Hints on conversion

The program should be convertible for use on any computer with user-defined characters.

CALL CHAR (ASCII code number, hexadecimal string) Defines characters used in the program. The hexadecimal string describes the pattern to be given to the character with ASCII code stated.

CALL HCHAR (row number, column number, ASCII code, number of repetitions) Places character on screen at row and column specified, and repeats it horizontally the number of times stated. If this fourth value is omitted then the character is displayed only once. The character used is the one whose ASCII code appears in the command.

CALL VCHAR (row number, column number, ASCII code, number of repetitions) Works in the same way as CALL HCHAR only repeats vertically instead of horizontally.

CALL GCHAR (row number, column number, numeric, numeric variable) Equivalent of PEEK, assigns ASCII code of character at row and column stated to numeric variable.

CALL CLEAR Clears the screen

CALL SCREEN (Colour code) Specifies screen colour, using colour code.

CALL COLOR (character set number, foreground colour code, background colour code) Specifies foreground and background colours for all characters in set stated.

CALL SOUND (duration, frequency, volume) Produces sound with duration, frequency, and volume specified. Duration is in milliseconds, frequency in Hertz (or noise code), and volume in scale from 0 loudest to 30 quietest.

CALL KEY (key unit, k,s) Equivalent of INKEY\$ in other computers, returns code if key pressed in variable k.

Poor Miss Muffet. She's been chased by a spider into a labyrinth. It's up to you to guide her to the golden door. Lance Booth wrote this program for the standard TI-99/4A

In this game of luck, skill and judgement, an evil spider has chased Miss Muffet into a labyrinth, which is about to fill with deadly green slime. Can you help her to escape in time?

You must guide her — using the four arrow keys with the alpha lock button down — through the labyrinth to the golden door, the only way out.

The spider is patrolling the passages of the labyrinth, spinning webs to block Miss Muffet's

escape. Don't let the spider catch Miss Muffet or it will devour her.

Take care not to let her get caught in a web or to touch the walls of the labyrinth which are covered with the spider's venom.

You set your own difficulty

level, when line 330 asks for your time limit. This sets the limit at which the program leaves the game loop from line 690, and moves to the out of time routine at line 930. A time limit of 150 could be quite a challenge to start with, even if you get the right breaks.

Once you've had some practice, trying to work down to a limit of 100 becomes an addiction.

A variation on the game, where the spider can be made to move from bottom to top, instead of top to bottom, can be achieved by changing line 490 from FOR SR = 3 TO 23 STEP 2 to FOR SR = 23 TO 3 STEP -2.

How it works

130-250 define characters and colours

260 sets screen colour to black

270-310 assign initial value to variables

320 clears screen

330 asks for time limit

340 clears screen ready for game

350-450 display labyrinth

460 displays Miss Muffet

470 displays Golden Door

480-780 main game loop

490-770 count down spider movement rows

500-510 & 750 control spider's movement along columns

520 checks keyboard

530 clears old player from screen

540-610 check for movement

620-660 check new screen positions

670 displays new player

680 adds one to penalty score

690 tests to see if limit is exceeded

700-710 check new spider position

720-740 move spider

760 displays web

790-810 touched the wall

820-890 eaten by spider

900-920 trapped in a web

930-990 ran out of time

1000-1060 play music

1070-1220 escape

1230-1250 display message

1260-1280 want to play again?

```

110 REM BY LANCE BOOTH
120 REM SET CHARACTERS
130 CALL CHAR(41,"FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF")
140 CALL CHAR(43,"183C7E183C7E1818")
150 CALL CHAR(128,"183C7EFFFFFFFF")
160 CALL CHAR(136,"7E5A7E7EA5A5A5A5")
170 CALL CHAR(152,"18187E183C7E2424")
180 REM SET COLOURS
190 CALL COLOR(13,12,1)
200 CALL COLOR(14,15,1)
210 CALL COLOR(15,10,10)
220 CALL COLOR(16,11,1)
230 FOR I=2 TO 8
240 CALL COLOR(I,3,1)
250 NEXT I
260 CALL SCREEN(2)
270 MR=23
280 MC=16
290 SCORE=0
300 RANDOMIZE
310 DC=INT(29*RND)+2
320 CALL CLEAR
330 INPUT "WHAT IS YOUR TIME LIMIT?"
    ":LIMIT
    
```



TI-99/4A PROGRAM

```

340 CALL CLEAR
350 REM SET SCREEN
360 CALL HCHAR(2,1,144,32)
370 CALL HCHAR(24,1,144,32)
380 CALL VCHAR(1,1,144,24)
390 CALL VCHAR(1,32,144,24)
400 CALL HCHAR(1,1,43,32)
410 FOR ROW=4 TO 22 STEP 2
420 CALL HCHAR(ROW,1,144,32)
430 X=INT(29*RND)+2
435 Z=INT(29*RND)+2
440 CALL HCHAR(ROW,X,32)
445 CALL HCHAR(ROW,Z,32)

```

```

450 NEXT ROW
460 CALL HCHAR(MR,MC,152)
470 CALL HCHAR(2,DC,128)
480 REM GAME LOOP
490 FOR SR=3 TO 23 STEP 2
500 Y=INT(29*RND)+2
510 FOR SC=2 TO Y
520 CALL KEY(3,K,S)
530 CALL HCHAR(MR,MC,32)
540 IF K<>83 THEN 560
550 MC=MC-1
560 IF K<>68 THEN 580
570 MC=MC+1
580 IF K<>69 THEN 600

```

```

590 MR=MR-1
600 IF K<>88 THEN 620
610 MR=MR+1
620 CALL GCHAR(MR,MC,GET)
630 IF GET=144 THEN 790
640 IF GET=136 THEN 820
650 IF GET=128 THEN 1070
660 IF GET=42 THEN 900
670 CALL HCHAR(MR,MC,152)
680 SCORE=SCORE+1
690 IF SCORE>LIMIT THEN 930
700 CALL GCHAR(SR,SC,GET)
710 IF GET=152 THEN 820
720 CALL HCHAR(SR,SC,136)
730 CALL SOUND(100,110,0)
740 CALL HCHAR(SR,SC,32)

```

```

750 NEXT SC
760 CALL HCHAR(SR,SC,42)
770 NEXT SR
780 GOTO 480
790 GOSUB 1000
800 M$="MISS MUFFET TOUCHED THE WALL"
810 GOTO 1230
820 FOR I=1 TO 10
830 CALL HCHAR(MR,MC,152)
840 CALL SOUND(50,-5,0)
850 CALL HCHAR(MR,MC,136)
860 NEXT I
870 GOSUB 1000
880 M$="THE SPIDER ATE MISS MUFFET"
890 GOTO 1230
900 GOSUB 1000
910 M$="MISS MUFFET'S TRAPPED IN A WEB"
920 GOTO 1230
930 FOR R=23 TO 3 STEP -2
940 CALL HCHAR(R,2,41,30)
950 CALL SOUND(-500,110+(R*10),0)
960 NEXT R
970 GOSUB 1000
980 M$="THE SLIME KILLED MISS MUFFET"
990 GOTO 1230
1000 REM DEATH TUNE
1010 TONE=1100
1020 FOR C=1 TO 10
1030 CALL SOUND(+500,TONE,0)
1040 TONE=TONE-110
1050 NEXT C

```

```

1060 RETURN
1070 NOTE=110
1080 FOR C=1 TO 10
1090 CALL SOUND(-500,NOTE,0)
1100 NOTE=NOTE+110
1110 NEXT C
1120 CALL HCHAR(1,MC,152)
1130 M$="WELL DONE MISS MUFFET ESCAPED"
1140 CALL CLEAR
1150 PRINT "YOUR SCORE IS",SCORE
1160 PRINT
1170 PRINT "PENALTY POINTS"
1180 PRINT
1190 CALL HCHAR(9,1,152,32)
1200 CALL HCHAR(10,1,43,32)
1210 CALL HCHAR(12,1,42,32)
1220 CALL HCHAR(13,1,136,32)
1230 FOR J=1 TO LEN(M$)
1240 CALL HCHAR(11,1+J,ASC(SEG$(M$,J,1)))
1250 NEXT J
1260 INPUT "WANT TO PLAY AGAIN? "A$
1270 IF SEG$(A$,1,1)="Y" THEN 270
1280 IF SEG$(A$,1,1)<>"N" THEN 1260
1290 END

```


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Airstrike Atari 400/800 £14.95

English Software, 50 Newton St, Piccadilly, Manchester

Airstrike seems popular as a demonstration at shows, and I can see why. It's a very good implementation of the arcade game Scramble.

There are all the usual objects — rockets, fuel and ammo dumps, mine storms, enemy aircraft and airlocks to be blasted through with the famous scramble landscape of rugged terrain and tortuous tunnels. After com-

pleting a level, you enter a more difficult one.

Your ship has a very positive feel, with missiles and bombs operated by the joystick button and the space bar. Fuel, score, remaining bombs and missiles and ships are all shown during play. The balance of this game is a lesson to others.

M.F.

instructions	70%
playability	90%
graphics	90%
value for money	85%



Skramble VIC-20 £5.99

Rabbit, 380 Station Road, Harrow, Middx HA1 2DE

Some of you may have noticed a similarity between the name of this game and that of a popular arcade game. This is no mistake!

Across an alien landscape flies our hero, dropping bombs and shooting things. There is no division of control between the gun and the bomb; fire one and you drop the other.

The enemy consist of what appear to be free-standing lavatory buildings with

associated winding gear. Later little rockets are launched at our space ship, which seems to be oil fired, as it is large tanks of this that we must hit in order to keep fuel up.

There are some pretty spiders to shoot next, and then the game gets difficult. . . .

I liked this game but it is rather flawed by the scoring system. Cumulative score is kept on the screen all through the game and then it disappears!

T.D.

instructions	70%
playability	50%
graphics	90%
value for money	55%



Annihilator VIC-20 £5.99

Rabbit, 380 Station Road, Harrow, Middx HA1 2DE

This is a Defender sub-clone, and I reckon it's a pretty good one. You know the plot: you're patrolling the rocky terrain of a distant planet when you should appear but etc, etc. . . .

Arcade games provide software writers with games to copy but also with impossibly high standards to reach. This time, the shortcomings of a little memory have to a great extent been overcome by adaption. The attackers come in waves, and the mobility

of the defending space ship is limited.

However, this is a very well-thought-out game, and one that should provide a great deal of pleasure for many of its purchasers. It sounds like a whole arcade of space invader machines gone crazy, but let's not hold that against it.

T.D.

instructions	45%
playability	78%
graphics	80%
value for money	85%



Legends in their own lifetime

Invaders, Scramble, Defender, Preppie — names that have gone down in microcomputer mythology

Preppie II Atari 400/800 32K (disc) £25.49

From Atari mail order companies

Yes folks, he's back. Just when the other micros thought they were catching up, Wadsworth Overcash — America's Number 1 Preppie — is in it again.

This time the owner of the Nasty Nine, furious after his defeat, has Wadsworth painting the floor of three mazes, whilst avoiding collision with the obstacles retained from Preppie. In the third and first mazes are

numerous giant frogs out for revenge.

Preppie II is completely new and once again has incredible music and colour, with a cartoon break between each of the five levels. The hi-res startup screen puts everything else to shame. Simply the best.

M.F.

instructions	100%
playability	100%
graphics	99%
value for money	100%



Invaders Oric-1 £4

Arcadia, Freeport, Swansea SA3 4ZZ

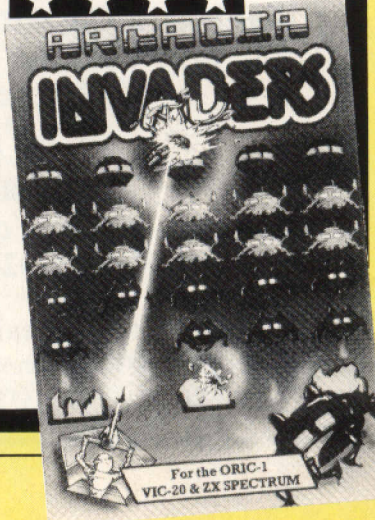
Hasn't Arcadia done well? There really isn't much difference between this and the original arcade game.

The game is colourful, with good, if subdued, sound. The control keys are well chosen, and don't require any complicated finger gymnastics when the action heats up.

On-screen instructions are good and unstuffy, the game is fully crash-proofed and well-presented. The high score flashes and plays a tune when you beat it.

R.S.

instructions	85%
playability	80%
graphics	75%
value for money	90%



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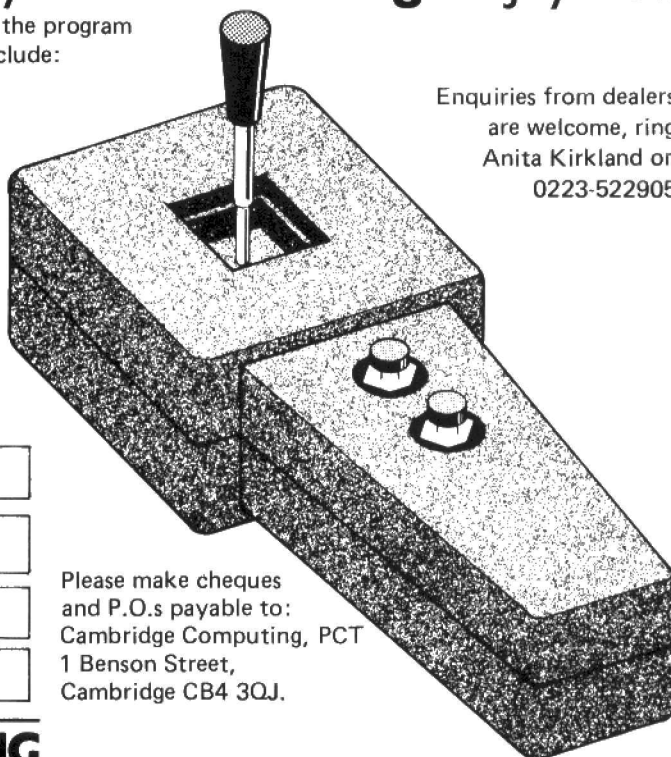
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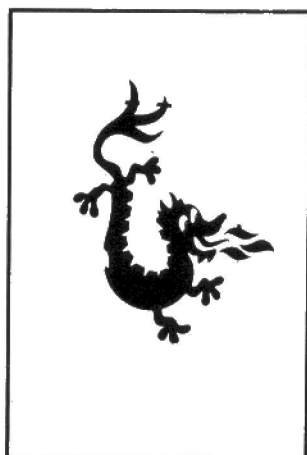
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Your mission: save the fleet

**Just you and your Spectrum can
defend the fleet against a rain
of bombs in Susan Kennedy's
program**



How it works
 10-50 set up user-defined graphics
 60 initialise best score and score
 80-90 POKE system variable to
 force CAPS lock
 110-160 set up array S with ship
 character
 170-210 initialise variables, INK
 black, PAPER cyan
 220-240 draw sea. Note: PRINT
 32 spaces
 245-300 draw the ships. Note:
 INK 1, PAPER 5, no
 BRIGHT and no FLASH,
 give display character at-
 tribute 41 uniquely to the
 ships
 310-360 update scores and
 initialise target sight X, Y at
 screen centre
 370 compute random bomb start
 position
 395-480 input arrow key presses
 and move sight accordingly,
 ensuring sight stays within
 screen boundary
 490 GOTO 1000 if F(ire) key
 pressed
 510 GOTO 2000 if time to move
 bomb
 1000-1040 check for bomb hit
 and adjust score accordingly
 2000-2030 move bomb, account-
 ing for any PAPER change
 2040-2160 is ship hit, i.e. bomb
 coincident with location of
 attribute 41, then search for
 which ship and explode it.
 Subtract 50 from score
 2200-2220 if sea bottom reached
 explode bomb and return to
 produce new bomb
 3000-3030 end of game questions
 4000-4060 bomb explosion sub-
 routine

Save the Fleet puts you in charge of a gun-sight with which you must aim and shoot down the bombs that are dropping on your fleet of ships.

The four arrow keys (5,6,7 and 8) control the gunsight movement with the F key being used for the fire button.

The bombs will appear randomly across the screen and at varying heights, thus increasing the uncertainty during the total attack of 50 bombs.

Scores in the game are accumulated by intercepting the bomb, with a higher score, the higher up the screen the bomb is hit. If you are too slow and a bomb hits a ship then you lose 50 points.

In order to maximise the speed of gun-sight movement whilst maintaining bomb movement and to overcome the problem of the Spectrum screen layout, a few interesting techniques have been employed.

The program leaves the gun-

sight movement loop approximately every 400 msec by testing for a difference of 20 in the least significant time frame byte from the time of the last bomb movement.

This is less accurate than using all three time frame bytes, but much faster, and the occasional quick movement of the bomb is not noticeable in the overall effect.

The time that could be taken to detect a hit on one of the ships would be slow if one had to search an array of screen locations.

This problem is neatly overcome by giving the ships a unique character attribute (41) and as much a hit can be detected by simply checking the attribute of the next bomb position. Once a hit has been established there is no longer the need to save time and a search can be made to find which ship was hit.

This game is fairly simple in concept and is aimed at showing that by giving thought to time

Variables

SC current score
 BSc best score
 S(5) array of ship locations
 T current system time
 T2 system time at last bomb
 move
 X,Y target sight screen position
 C bomb left count
 X2,Y2 bomb screen position
 AS input key pressed

saving an arcade game can be written in BASIC. However, providing the time available to moving the gunsight is maintained, many improvements could be made such as:

- Slow down bomb movement but increase the number of simultaneous bombs.
- Introduce graphic lines of fire from the ships.
- Introduce random explosive flashes on the screen aimed at confusing the player.

I recommend that you first type in and run lines 10-50, which set up the user-defined graphics. This will aid you when typing in the graphic lines in the rest of the program.

The graphics are: A bomb, B gunsight, CDE ship, FGH submarine, I explosion.

```

10 REM SET UP USER GRAPHICS
20 DATA 255,255,66,60,60,24,24
24,129,66,60,36,36,60,66,129,0,
1,7,7,255,127,63,31,0,196,196,20
7,255,255,255,255,0,128,128,192,
255,254,252,248,0,0,1,1,31,63,31
15,192,192,192,192,255,255,255,
255,0,0,0,64,240,252,252,240,17,
186,124,62,255,126,92,138
30 FOR I=32600 TO 32671
40 READ A: POKE I,A
50 NEXT I
60 LET SC=0: LET BSC=0
70 RANDOMIZE
80 REM SET CAPS LOCK
90 POKE 23656,8
100 BORDER 0
110 DIM S(5)
130 DATA 3,9,13,18,25
140 FOR I=1 TO 5
150 READ S(I)
160 NEXT I
170 CLS
180 IF BSC<SC THEN LET BSC=SC
190 LET T2=0: LET C=51: LET SC=0
200 INK 0: PAPER 5
210 LET X=10: LET Y=16
220 FOR I=19 TO 21
230 PRINT AT I,0;"
240 NEXT I
245 REM DRAW SHIPS-ATTR 41
  
```


SPECTRUM PROGRAM

```

250 INK 1
260 PRINT AT 19,3;" "
270 PRINT AT 19,13;" "
280 PRINT AT 19,18;" "
290 PRINT AT 21,9;" "
300 PRINT AT 21,25;" "
310 INK 0: PAPER 7
320 PRINT AT 0,16;"HIGH SCORE="
BSC
330 PAPER 7: PRINT AT X,Y;" "
340 LET X=10: LET Y=16
350 PRINT AT 0,0;" "
360 PRINT AT 0,0;SC
365 REM START POSITION OF BOMB
370 LET X2=(INT (RND*6))+1: LET
Y2=INT (RND*32)
380 LET C=C-1
390 IF C=0 THEN GO TO 3000
400 LET A$=INKEY$
410 IF A$="6" THEN PRINT AT X,Y
" "
LET X=X+1
420 IF A$="7" THEN PRINT AT X,Y
" "
LET X=X-1
430 IF A$="8" THEN PRINT AT X,Y
" "
LET Y=Y+1
440 IF A$="5" THEN PRINT AT X,Y
" "
LET Y=Y-1
450 LET X=ABS X: LET Y=ABS Y
460 IF X>18 THEN LET X=18
470 IF Y>31 THEN LET Y=31
480 PRINT AT X,Y;"X"
485 REM FIRE PRESSED ?
490 IF A$="F" THEN GO TO 1000
500 LET T=PEEK 23672
505 REM TIME TO MOVE BOMB ?
510 IF ABS (T-T2)>20 THEN GO TO
2000
520 GO TO 400
995 REM TEST FOR HIT
1000 IF X2<>X THEN GO TO 400
1010 IF Y2<>Y THEN GO TO 400
1020 GO SUB 4000
1030 LET SC=SC+INT (100/X2)

```

```

1040 GO TO 330
2000 IF X2>=19 THEN PAPER 5
2010 PRINT AT X2,Y2;" "
2015 REM MOVE BOMB
2020 LET X2=X2+1
2030 IF X2=19 THEN PAPER 5
2040 IF ATTR (X2,Y2)<>41 THEN GO
TO 2100
2055 REM HIT SHIP BUT WHICH ?
2060 FOR I=1 TO 5
2070 FOR J=0 TO 2
2080 IF Y2=S(I)+J THEN GO TO 211
0
2090 NEXT J
2100 NEXT I
2105 REM EXPLODE SHIP
2110 FLASH 1: BRIGHT 1: INK 2
2120 PRINT AT X2,S(I);" "
2130 BEEP 1,1
2140 FLASH 0: BRIGHT 0: INK 0
2150 PRINT AT X2,S(I);" "
2160 LET SC=SC-50
2170 PAPER 7: GO TO 330
2180 PRINT AT X2,Y2;" "
2190 LET T2=T
2195 REM TEST FOR SEA BOTTOM
2200 IF X2<>21 THEN PAPER 7: GO
TO 400
2210 GO SUB 4000
2220 PAPER 7: GO TO 330
3000 PRINT AT 5,0;"PLAY AGAIN (Y
OR N)"
3010 IF INKEY$="Y" THEN GO TO 17
0
3020 IF INKEY$="N" THEN NEW
3030 GO TO 3010
3995 REM BOMB EXPLOSION
4000 FLASH 1: BRIGHT 1: INK 2
4010 PRINT AT X2,Y2;" "
4020 BEEP .5,1
4030 FLASH 0: BRIGHT 0: INK 0
4040 PRINT AT X2,Y2;" "
4050 RETURN

```

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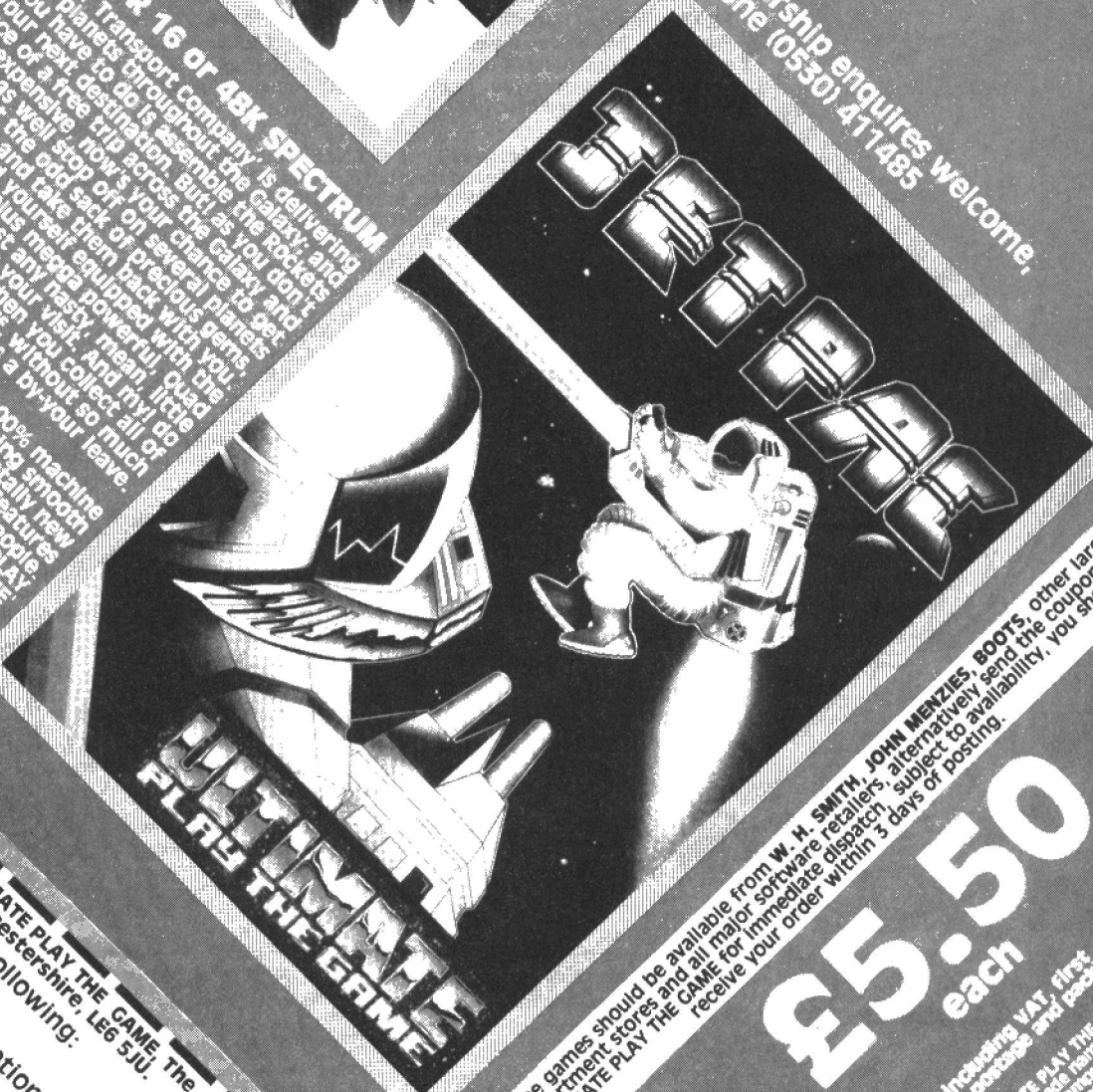
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The object of Dragatak is to shoot down as many aliens as you can as they try to move erratically up the screen and past your space station.

You have control of horizontal movement through the right hand joystick, but don't get too close as you shoot or you may collide!

You score 100 or more points for each alien you destroy depending on how far away they are when you hit them.

The game ends when:

- Ten aliens have got past you or
- You have run out of plasma bolts or
- You collide with an alien

There is a continuous read-out at the bottom of the screen showing, from right to left, the number of lives the aliens have left; your current score; and the number of plasma bolts you have left.

Variables

Arrays

SP space station graphic (base)
BL/LB blanking graphics
EX explosion graphic
TH alien graphics
No to N9 numeral graphics for score display

Simple

X,Y co-ordinates of space station
X1,Y1 co-ordinates of space station's previous position
XF,YF co-ordinates of alien
FX,FY co-ordinates of alien's previous position
PB number of plasma bolts remaining
LV number of lives remaining

Plasma bolts at the ready

Those aliens are at it again. See how many you can blast into oblivion in Brian Hughes' game for the Dragon

```
10 PMODE 3:PCLS3: CLEAR 200,31999
20 GOSUB1090:GOSUB720:GOSUB 1250
30 FOR I=1 TO 50:PSET(RND(255)-1,RND(176)+8,2):N
EXT I
40 POKE &HFFD7,0:SCREEN1,0
50 X=INT(JOYSTK(0)*3.79)
60 IF X=X1 THEN 90
70 PUT(X1,0)-(X1+15,7),LB,PSET
80 PUT(X,0)-(X+15,7),SP,PSET:X1=X
90 IF PB<1 THEN GOTO 230
100 BH=PEEK(65280)AND3
110 IF BH<2 THEN GOTO 230
120 PB=PB-1
130 PUT(234,184)-(241,191),BL,PSET:XC=PB:NX=250:
ZQ=2:GOTO 530
140 COLOR 2,3
150 NK=160
160 IF X+7<XF THEN 190
170 IF X+7>XF+7 THEN 190
180 NK=YF+4
190 LINE(X+7,8)-(X+7,NK),PSET
200 LINE(X+7,NK)-(X+7,8),PSET
210 SOUND 100,1
220 IF NK<160 THEN 380
230 PUT(XF,YF)-(XF+7,YF+7),BL,PSET
240 IF YF>7 THEN 280
250 IF XF>X+15 THEN 280
260 IF XF<X THEN 280
270 GOTO 440
280 GET(FX,FY)-(FX+7,FY+7),BL,G
290 PUT(FX,FY)-(FX+7,FY+7),TH,PSET
```

How it works

- 30 sets a background of randomly located stars
- 40 increase speed
- 50-80 check joysticks and move base accordingly
- 90 checks for out of plasma bolts
- 100 checks for fire button being pressed
- 140-220 fire plasma bolt and check for hit
- 230-290 check for collision between alien and base
- 300-370 move alien randomly up screen
- 380-420 make a struck alien explode and generate appropriate sound (note the use of a fast tempo, multi-noted 'play' string for an interesting sound effect)
- 430 updates score for a hit and branches to score display routine
- 440-480 collision routine: inverts screen via machine code procedure; then sounds klaxon
- 490-510 reset variables for restart. Checks for running out of lives which is dealt with in 580-610
- 520-710 update and displays current scores
- 720-990 sets up all the graphic arrays to be used in 'put/get' operations in the main loop
- 1000-1080 "do you want to play again?" screen — resets variables if answer is yes
- 1090-1230 fill screen with playing instructions. There is a delay loop at 1220 which can be altered if wished
- 1250-1290 sets up machine code routine for screen inversion

Hints on conversion

Not recommended! Definitely a case for writing your own version. If you have a machine that supports user defined graphics and allows text on graphic screens then you could construct a more compact program than this.

```
300 XF=FX:YF=FY
310 IF FY<8 THEN 490
320 FY=FY-8
330 H=ZT(RND(2))
340 IF FX<8 THEN H=8
350 IF FX>239 THEN H=-8
360 FX=FX+H
370 GOTO 50
380 PLAY "V31":FOR I=1 TO 5
390 PUT(XF,YF)-(XF+7,YF+7),EX,PSET
400 PUT(XF,YF)-(XF+7,YF+7),BL,PSET
410 PLAY"T255\X\RGDFDC9BBGDDFR"
420 NEXT I:FX=RND(248)-1:FY=177:XF=0
430 SC=SC+100+INT(YF/32)*100:YF=9:GOTO 520
440 EXEC 32000:POKE &HFFD6,0:FOR I=1 TO 5
450 SOUND182,5:SOUND150,4
460 NEXT I
470 A$=" you've been hit by an alien "
480 PCLS3:GOTO 1000
490 FX=RND(248)-1:FY=177
500 LV=LV-1
510 IF LV<1 THEN GOTO 580 ELSEXC=LV:NX=24:ZQ=1:G
OTO 530
520 XC=SC:NX=160:ZQ=1
530 RM=XC-(INT(XC/10)*10):NX=NX-10
540 RM=RM+1
550 ON RM GOSUB 620,630,640,650,660,670,680,690,
```

```
700,710
560 XC=INT(XC/10)
570 IF XC<1 THEN ON ZQ GOTO 50,140 ELSE GOTO 530
580 POKE &HFFD6,0
590 SOUND 1,10
600 A$="
610 GOTO 1000 alien attack over
620 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N0,PSET:RETURN
630 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N1,PSET:RETURN
640 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N2,PSET:RETURN
650 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N3,PSET:RETURN
660 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N4,PSET:RETURN
670 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N5,PSET:RETURN
680 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N6,PSET:RETURN
690 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N7,PSET:RETURN
700 PUT(NX,184)-(NX+7,191),N8,PSET:RETURN
710 POKE &HFFD7,0
720 DIM SP(15,8),BL(8,8),LB(16,8),EX(8,8),TH(8,8),
N6(8,8),N7(8,8),N8(8,8),N9(8,8),N4(8,8),N5(8,8),
F=9:H=8:SC=0:PB=50:LV=0
750 FOR I=0 TO 15:FORJ=0 TO 1:PSET(I,J,4):NEXTJ,
I
```


DRAGON PROGRAM

```

760 FOR I= 2 TO 13:FOR J= 2 TO 3:PSET(I,J,4):NEX
T J,I
770 FOR I=4 TO 11:FOR J= 4 TO 5:PSET(I,J,4):NEX
T J,I
780 FOR I= 6 TO 9:PSET(I,6,4):NEXT I
790 FOR I=7 TO 8:PSET(I,7,4):NEXT I
800 GET(0,0)-(15,7),SP,G:PCLS3
810 GET(0,0)-(7,7),BL,G:PCLS3:GET(0,0)-(15,7),LB
,G:PCLS3
820 FOR I= 3 TO 4:PSET(I,0,1):NEXT I:FOR I=2 TO 5
:PSET(I,1,1):NEXT I:FOR I=2 TO 3:FOR J=1 TO 6:PSET(J,I,
1):NEXT J,I
830 FOR I= 4 TO 5:FOR J=2 TO 5:PSET(J,I,1):NEXT J
,I
840 FOR I= 0 TO 1:PSET(I+1,6,1):PSET(I+5,6,1):NE
XT I
850 FOR I=0 TO 7:PSET(I,7,1):NEXT I
860 GET(0,0)-(7,7),TH,G:PCLS3
870 FOR I= 1 TO 34:PSET(RND(8)-1,RND(8)-1,2):NEX
T I
880 GET(0,0)-(7,7),EX,G:PCLS3
890 FOR I=0 TO 6 STEP 2:PSET(I,0,2):PSET(I,7,2):
NEXT I:FOR I=0 TO 7:PSET(0,I,2):PSET(7,I,2):NEXT
I
900 GET(0,0)-(7,7),N0,G:PCLS3
910 FOR I=0 TO 7:PSET(4,I,2):NEXT I:GET(0,0)-(7,
7),N1,G:PCLS3
920 FOR I=0 TO 6 STEP 2:PSET(I,0,2):PSET(I,3,2):
PSET(I,7,2):NEXT I:FOR I=1 TO 3:PSET(5,I,2):PSET
(0,I+3,2):NEXT I:GET(0,0)-(7,7),N2,G:PCLS3
930 FOR I=0 TO 6 STEP 2:PSET(I,0,2):PSET(I,3,2):
PSET(I,7,2):NEXT I:FOR I=0 TO 7:PSET(5,I,2):NEXT
I:GET(0,0)-(7,7),N3,G:PCLS3
940 FOR I=0 TO 6 STEP 2:PSET(I,3,2):NEXT I:FOR I
=0 TO 3:PSET(0,I,2):PSET(5,I,2):PSET(5,I+4,2):NEX
T I:GET(0,0)-(7,7),N4,G:PCLS3
950 FOR I=0 TO 6 STEP 2:PSET(I,0,2):PSET(I,3,2):
PSET(I,7,2):NEXT I:FOR I=0 TO 3:PSET(0,I,2):PSET
(6,I+4,2):NEXT I:GET(0,0)-(7,7),N5,G
960 FOR I=4 TO 6:PSET(0,I,2):NEXT I:GET(0,0)-(7,
7),N6,G:PSET(6,I,2):PSET(6,2,2):GET(0,0)-(7,7),N
8,G
970 FOR I=0 TO 4 STEP 2:PSET(I,7,3):NEXT I:FOR I=
4 TO 6:PSET(0,I,3):NEXT I:GET(0,0)-(7,7),N9,G:PC
LS3
980 FOR I=0 TO 6 STEP 2:PSET(I,0,2):NEXT I:FOR I
=1 TO 7:PSET(6,I,2):NEXT I:GET(0,0)-(7,7),N7,G
990 RETURN
1000 SCREEN0,0:CLS
1010 PRINT@96,A$
1020 PRINT@230,"YOUR FINAL SCORE IS:-";SC
1030 PRINT@416,"do you want to Play again?(YOR)"
"
1040 F$=INKEY$:IF F$="" THEN 1040
1050 IF F$<>"Y" THEN CLS:END
1060 LV=10:PB=50:SC=0:FX=RND(248)-1:FY=177:XF=0:
YF=9
1070 PCLS3
1080 POKE &HDDF7,0:GOTO 30
1090 CLS:PRINT@10,"alien attack"
1100 PRINT@64,"SHOOT DOWN THE INVADING ALIENS"
1110 PRINT@96,"AS THEY TRY TO PASS YOU"
1120 PRINT@160,"YOU SCORE 100+ FOR EVERY ALIEN"
1130 PRINT@192,"YOU HIT-BUT WATCH OUT FOR"
1140 PRINT@224,"COLLISIONS!YOU CAN MOVE YOUR"
1150 PRINT@256,"SPACE STATION HORIZONTALLY USING
"
1160 PRINT@288,"THE RIGHT HAND JOYSTICK,AND FIRE
"
1170 PRINT@320,"PLASMA BOLTS USING THE FIRE"
1180 PRINT@352,"BUTTON-BUT BEWARE-YOU ONLY HAVE"
1190 PRINT@384,"50 BOLTS.THE ALIENS WILL KEEP"
1200 PRINT@416,"COMING AS LONG AS YOU SHOOT THEM
"
1210 PRINT@448,"DOWN-YOU HAVE TEN LIVES"
1220 FOR I=1 TO 3500:NEXT I
1230 RETURN
1250 FOR I= 1 TO 26
1260 READ A:POKE I+31999,A
1270 NEXT I
1280 RETURN
1290 DATA 198,9,142,6,0,166,136,0,67,167,136,0,4
8,136,1,140,30,0,38,241,90,193,0,38,233,57

```

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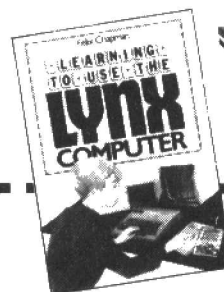
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READ-OUT

HCW19



Computer flights of fantasy

Know the fear of flying with these aerial adventures for a range of micros.

Nightflight Dragon 32 £7.95

Salamander Software, 27 Ditching Rise, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 4QL

If this is a flight simulator I am green with yellow stripes (I'm not!). The Dragon can do, and has done, much better stuff than this. The best thing about the game is the opening title page, and even then they played Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines wrong!

Low resolution graphics, bad use of colour and unrealistic

sound. The scene did not look at all like a plane cockpit...no dials, all the same presentation.

I would now like to say "on the plus side", but there isn't a plus side. I suppose the instructions were clear(ish) but they weren't relevant to the game.

Psion's flight simulation program for the ZX81 is much better than this, it has higher resolution graphics, is more responsive and more realistic.

instructions 80%
playability 10%
graphics 10%
value for money 3%



Night Flight TI-99/4A £5.00

Stainless Software, 10 Alstone Road, Stockport, Cheshire

As commander of the Starship Patscram, it is your task to clear a landing strip in a hostile city defended by ground lasers and spacecraft.

This is an addictive game which requires dexterity to manipulate the 10 keys needed to play fully. There are plenty of skill levels and great scope for player improvement.

You score points for forward movement and firing splat bombs but these diminish your fuel. Points are also awarded for

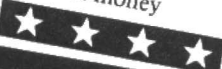
destroying the enemy, safe landing and refuelling. High scores can be saved on tape.

This is a lengthy program to load but there is only a minimum delay in setting up. It has at least two bugs:

- 1 The acceleration command lets your ship eat the right-hand boundary.
- 2 Bomb speed keys are inoperable if ship's control keys are reselected.

But these are minor irritations in what is otherwise a very good TI game.

instructions 90%
playability 80%
graphics 90%
value for money 90%



Winging It TI-99/4A £10

Not Polyoptics, from Stainless Software, 10 Alstone Road, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 5AH

Could this be the first flight simulator for the TI? Once you've mastered basic flying, you can progress to one of three games. In game 1 you locate and fly over a meteorite, game 2 sets you the task of finding and destroying a flying saucer, and in game 3 you are pitted against an enemy plane.

There's no 3D view of the runway or the like, but there is a first-class display of the instru-

ment panel, and realistic engine noises. Comprehensive instructions are supplied.

The instructions warn that beginners may have a rough ride, and they aren't kidding. Taking off was OK, but once in the air I found an affinity for flying upside down and making unscheduled and rather violent landings.

Still, practice makes perfect. I thought this was an excellent program, which should appeal to budding pilots of all ages.

instructions 100%
playability 90%
graphics 90%
value for money 90%



Landfall BBC B £7.95

Virgin Games, 61/13 Portobello Road, London W11

This is a sort of sophisticated Lunar Lander, though as the landing process is all done by instruments, it could be more aptly described as a spaceship landing simulator.

The overall effect is very convincing, colour is unobtrusive but effective, and the sounds (which you can switch off) are realistic.

Landing safely is no easy feat - you really have to watch all the gauges and keep a balance

to avoid being burned up on entry. I never managed to land at all, and would have liked some sort of variable difficulty level or practice option.

The program loads in three blocks, and after loading the first I had all the signs of a crash on my hands. After several attempts I just let it continue, and it loaded the second block - a screen picture, then the game.

instructions 80%
playability 67%
graphics 73%
value for money 86%



Up Up and Away Atari 400/800 £14.95

Starcade, 15 Moorfields, Liverpool, L22 BQ

If you've worn your nerve-endings to a frazzle with pacman, invading creatures and perilous adventures, perhaps you think hot-air ballooning would make a nice quiet change. Take it from me - Up Up and Away will make you want to keep your feet firmly on the ground.

You take off with a limited amount of butane and ballast, and your aim is to fly round a cir-

cuit avoiding hazards on the way. These range from nasty little boys with slingshots, updraughts and downdraughts, thunderstorms, the local Flying School for the Shortsighted, and even incontinent pigeons!

The graphics are among the best I've ever seen, and the five levels of difficulty will provide a long-lasting challenge.

instructions 80%
playability 85%
graphics 95%
value for money 85%



ANIROG SOFTWARE

KRAZY KONG

An E-XPANDED screen, large graphics, rolling barrels, hammer, fireballs, lifts, handbags and umbrellas as you try to rescue the damsel Kong has abducted. Spectacular collapse of Kong's lair in the fourth screen. Uses all 21K of your expanded Vic for this 100% M.C. thriller. Complete with high score table.

KB/JS VIC 20 16K £7.90

MINI-KONG

For UNEXP from the writer of Krazy Kong comes the equally brilliant Mini-Kong. You will wonder how he managed to cram so much in the unexpanded VIC. Brilliant multi-colour graphics, expanded screen, lift, rolling barrels, ladders, running score/HI-score and not to forget the hand bag bonus in this all M/C presentation.

K.B./J.S. VIC 20 UNEXP £5.95

XENO II

An E-XPANDED screen presentation with superb action packed space thriller, written entirely in machine code with four action packed stages. To destroy the power source of Xeno II you have to fight off waves of robot attack, plasma bombing by the legions of the outer sanctum and finally attack the power source protected by a force field, continuous bombardment by guardians and blockading by wild whirling suicidal space ships. Truly a game for all arcadians.

JS VIC 20 16K £7.90

THE DUNGEONS

Enter the realms of fantasy with this superb high resolution, multi-colour graphical text adventure. Choose your role as a fighter with armour or a magician with spells to do battle with the fearful fire breathing RED DRAGON and many other horrific monsters in THE DUNGEONS with 100 rooms, many with ingenious traps. First of the text adventures that will keep you enthralled and frustrated for a very long time if you use the fast save facility or give up and have a new adventure.

K.B. VIC 20 16K £5.95

FROGRUN

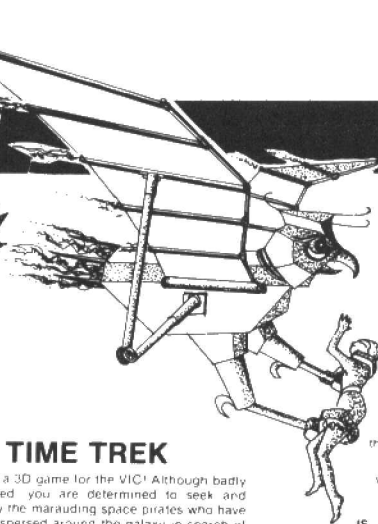
Popular arcade game. All machine code with brilliant colour graphics and sound effect. Features include snakes, crocodiles, lady frogs, turtles, cars, torries and logs.

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DOTMAN

Ghosts chase you as you try to eat the dots and collect points. You can turn the tables or them by eating the pills. Don't forget the ghosts have been given intelligence and will try to corner you. This feature makes Dotman exciting and challenging. All M.C. game complete with running and highest scores and tunnels.

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GALACTIC ABDUCTORS

A stunning action packed game which uses all of your TV screen for the superb large animated graphics. Giant Space Hawks whirl and weave in intricate patterns as they drop their deadly homing mines which will destroy your base on contact. While you are busy defending yourself, the Hawks will feed on your helpless population, returning only their skulls. All M.C. game complete with high score table that will blow your mind with its graphics and sound effects.

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3D TIME TREK

At last a 3D game for the VIC! Although badly wounded, you are determined to seek and destroy the marauding space pirates who have now dispersed around the galaxy in search of fresh prey. A brilliant Star Trek game with a difference - spectacular 3D graphics and real arcade actions.

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ZOK'S KINGDOM

Your starcruiser badly damaged in a meteor storm is forced to crash land on the planet ruled by ZOK, a time space generated image of Dracula. You are challenged to a battle of wits and endurance as the battle for survival starts in earnest in this big multi-screen graphical adventure in huge graphics and M.C. movements.

KB/JS VIC 20 16K £5.95

SLAP DAB

An exciting game based on the arcade game PAINTER which combines fast action with strategy. Giant insects hiding under the old paint surface are revealed by your paint brush. You require fast action and quick thinking to outwit them and finish the panel. The game is 100 percent machine code and HI-RES. graphics also includes HI-score and running score with brilliant sound effects.

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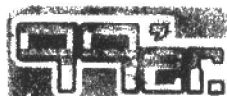
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HCW 19

Give your VIC lots more character

There are few items of software available for the VIC-20 that do not use custom designed characters in some way. Most home computers have the ability to display user defined characters but the VIC seems to have better facilities than most.

In short, the VIC enables you to redesign a full set of 256 characters. In fact, by switching between the ROM sets, a 256 full set and a 128 half set, you have access to a grand total of 640 characters (and that's enough for anybody).

The one big nuisance with user defined characters is the designing/entering stage of the characters. To the uninitiated, this process involves:

- Design the character on some kind of eight by eight grid.
- Calculate the data value corresponding to each line of the character.
- Enter the data values into the right portion of RAM in the VIC.

In all, this job is soul destroying, tedious and unnecessary. The logical approach is to use a program to perform all the work. A number of software houses have accepted this fact, and a number of character designing routines are available, at a price.

I have used a number of commercially available programs and came to the conclusion that none provided an adequate environment for the design of large numbers of new characters.

In this light, I have developed a routine which provides all the necessary facilities. This article describes the routine and give instructions for its use.

First I will give the basic design criteria I specified for the routine.

- The routine must enable the user to create 256 new characters at one sitting without recourse to unwieldy use of tape storage.
- All data manipulation should be fast with use of machine code as required.
- The program should allow you to create 'macros' consisting of up to 25 characters.
- The editor should offer as many facilities as possible but remain uncomplicated.

Take the tedium out of redesigning characters. Allen Webb's program for the VIC-20 does the work for you

Figure 1 — memory map

STORE BUFFER	\$4000
EDITOR PROGRAM	\$3800
EDIT BUFFER	\$1C00
MACHINE CODE	\$1400
SCREEN MEMORY	\$1200
	\$1000

- There should be facilities for the saving and loading of character files on tape and the down-loading of the character block to the correct RAM area.

In view of these requirements, it soon became clear that a memory expansion of at least 8K was necessary. The operational foibles of the 6560 chip are such that any new characters must reside at specified locations between \$1000 and \$1E00. As a consequence the bottom of BASIC must be raised to accommodate the characters. Figure 1 gives details of the new memory map.

The simplest method of handling the characters was to use two storage buffers. An edit buffer located at between \$1800 and \$1A00 is used to hold the block of 64 characters during the editing process.

A larger storage block residing at \$3800 is used to store the full 256 characters as four blocks. Blocks of 64 characters are then moved from the storage

buffer to the edit buffer for design and then back again for storage.

The first step is to type in the program. Do this as you would any other program but **don't run it yet!** Save the program. Reset the VIC by a SYS 64802.

- Type in the one line program:
10 POKE 44,28: RUN
- Execute the direct command:
POKE 642,28: SYS64824
- Load the character editor.
Type in POKE44,18 followed by Return.
- SAVE the program as normal.

You now have a relocated routine as described in Figure 1. I suggest that you make at least three verified copies of the routine (accidents can happen!!). You can now run and debug the program.

Now the hard work is over, we can now get down to using the

program. On running you will see the main menu. You select the options by pressing the corresponding number.

Option 1 enters the edit mode and gives you a screen similar to Figure 2.

The display is rather crowded so I'll give a quick run down on the items. The top three lines show the 64 characters in the edit buffer. The character being edited is printed in cyan to distinguish it from the rest. The edit window is the 8x8 grid in which the character is designed. The macro window is used for building up complex forms out of several characters.

The column of numbers between the windows are the data values for use in data statements, if required. The command line is used for input prompts. The bottom two lines summarise the commands available in this mode.

On entering edit mode the first character is selected for editing. This character is drawn in the edit window and the corresponding data values shown. A chequered edit cursor is printed in the top left corner of the window. This cursor is printed in the top left corner of the window. This cursor can be moved with the normal cursor controls (ie up, down, left, right & home). Pressing return will send the cursor to the extreme left of the next line down. CLR will clear the edit window. Pressing * will set the point under the cursor and SPACE will clear the point. The data values and the character in the top three lines will change as you edit the character.

Two commands enable you to change the orientation of the character:

I will invert the character.
R will reverse or reflect the character.

Once you have finished with the character you can move on to another by one of two commands:
N will move on to the next character.
G will goto any specified character.

You can copy any character by pressing 'C'.

You enter macro mode by pressing M. You will then be asked if you wish to clear the window. You can specify the size of the macro up to a size of 5x5.

A cursor will appear and you will be asked to enter the characters to be used in the macro. The character currently under the cursor will be given as a default value to help prevent unnecessary typing.

VIC-20 PROGRAMMING

Press E to leave edit mode and return to the main menu. I realize that the number of editing commands is large, but after a short time you will get the hang of it.

The second option on the main menu relates to the movement of data. On pressing 2, you will see a second menu. Options 1 and 2 allow you to move character blocks from the store buffer to the edit buffer and vice versa. Option 3 allows you to download any of the blocks of characters in the ROM to the edit buffer. Option 4 will fill the edit buffer with blanks. You can abort any of the data movement commands by pressing *.

Option 3 on the main menu will kill the program and restore your full memory. The store buffer is down-loaded to the space \$1400 to \$1C00. The start of BASIC at \$1C00 and leave any characters below it intact.

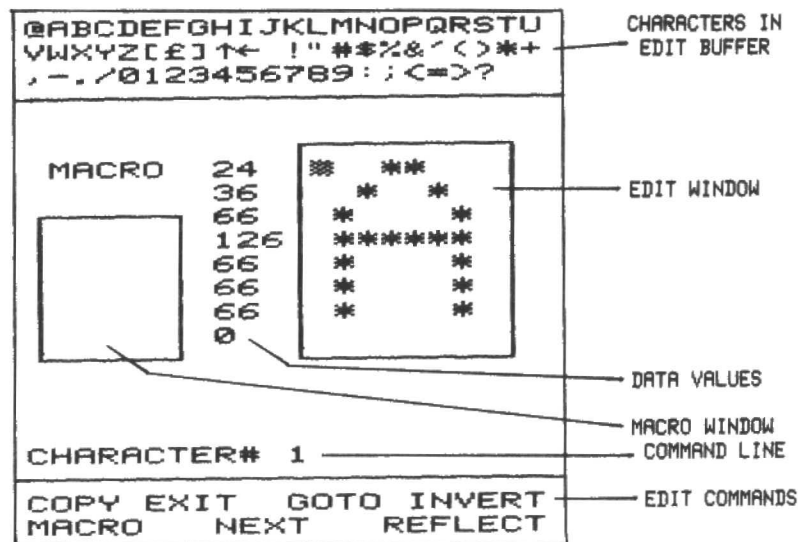
Options 4 and 5 enable you to save and load the store buffer on tape. This is useful if you plan to spend several sessions designing your character sets.

Option 6 on the main menu will display the contents of the store buffer on screen. Each block of 64 characters will be displayed in a different colour. You should be careful to save the edit buffer in the store buffer before using this option since the edit buffer will be corrupted.

OK, so what do you do when you've designed your character set?

You must ensure before proceeding that all of the

Figure 2 — what the screen looks like



characters are in the store buffer. If you kill the program with option 3 of the main menu, this restores your full memory and puts the store buffer in the area starting at \$1400.

The start of BASIC is still at \$1C00. You can now load or type in your own program. To use the new set of characters redirect the internal pointer with POKE 36869, 205. To save your program with the character set:

Input the command POKE44,18 followed by Return.

Save and verify the program as normal.

```

450 IFA=17ANDY<8THENNY=Y+1:NX=X:GOTO670
470 IFA=145ANDY<1THENNY=Y-1:NX=X:GOTO670
480 IFA=29ANDX<8THENNX=X+1:NY=Y:GOTO670
490 IFA=157ANDX<1THENNX=X-1:NY=Y:GOTO670
500 IF(A=17ORA=145ORA=29ORA=157)THEN670
510 IFA=19THENPOKEFNA(X),LC:X=1:Y=1:GOTO430
520 IFA=147THEN640
530 IFA=42THEN680
540 IFA=32THEN720
550 IFA=70THEN760
560 IFA=67THEN820
570 IFA=69THEN860
580 IFA=77THEN870
590 IFA=71THEN780
600 IF A=13THEN1010
610 IFA=73THEN1040
620 IFA=82THEN1070
630 POKEFNA(X),LC:GOTO430
640 FORV=1TO8:FORX=1TO8
650 POKEFNA(X),32:NEXTX,Y:FORV=1TO8:GOSUB1750:NEXT:GOSUB1840
660 X=1:Y=1:GOTO430
670 POKEFNA(X),LC:X=NX:Y=NY:GOTO430
680 POKEFNA(X),42:TX=X:TY=Y:GOSUB1750:X=TX:Y=TY
690 PRINTLEFT$(CUR$,6+Y);TAB(7) " *****PEEK(6144+CN*8+Y-1)
700 IFX=8THEN430
710 X=X+1:GOTO430
720 POKEFNA(X),32:TX=X:TY=Y:GOSUB1750:X=TX:Y=TY
730 PRINTLEFT$(CUR$,6+Y);TAB(7) " *****PEEK(6144+CN*8+Y-1)
740 IFX=8THEN430
750 X=X+1:GOTO430
760 POKE37888+CN,6:IFCN<63THENCN=CN+1
770 GOTO340
780 LI=18:GOSUB1820:INPUT"GO TO CHARACTER#";C9:C9=VAL(C9)
790 IFC9>63ORC9<8THEN780
800 POKE37888+CN,6:CN=C9
810 POKE37888+CN,6:GOTO340
820 LI=18:GOSUB1820:INPUT"WIDTH OF MACRO ";HI:HI=VAL(HI):IFHI>50RHI<8THEN870
830 POKEFNA(X),LC:TX=X:TY=Y
840 FORV=10TO9+HI:FORX=1TOWI
850 POKEFNA(X),C1+127:POKEFNA(X),C1+128
860 NEXT:GOTO340
870 LI=18:GOSUB1820:INPUT"CLEAR MACRO AREA";IN:IFIN="N"THEN980
880 IFIN<"Y"THEN870
890 FORV=10TO14:FORX=1TO5:POKEFNA(X),32:NEXT:NEXT
900 LI=18:GOSUB1820:INPUT"HEIGHT OF MACRO ";HI:HI=VAL(HI):IFHI>50RHI<8THEN870
910 LI=18:GOSUB1820:INPUT"WIDTH OF MACRO ";HI:HI=VAL(HI):IFHI>50RHI<8THEN870
920 POKEFNA(X),LC:TX=X:TY=Y
930 FORV=10TO9+HI:FORX=1TOWI
940 CA=PEEK(FNA(X)):IFCA<127THENCA=CA-128
950 POKEFNA(X),102:POKEFNA(X),OF:6
960 LI=18:GOSUB1820:PRINT"CHARACTER#";CA
970 INPUT"*****";C1:C1=VAL(C1)
980 IFC1>63ORC1<8THEN970
990 POKEFNA(X),C1+128:NEXT:NEXT:X=TX:Y=TY
1000 LI=18:GOSUB1820:PRINT"EDITING CHARACTER#CN=POKE37888+CN,3:GOTO430
1010 POKEFNA(X),LC
1020 IFV<8THENV=Y+1
1030 X=1:GOTO430
1040 FORI=8TO7:NO(I)=PEEK(6144+CN*8+I):NEXT
1050 FORI=8TO7:POKE(6144+CN*8+I),NO(7-I):NEXT
1060 GOTO340
1070 FORI=8TO7:NO=PEEK(6144+CN*8+I):FORI=8TO7
1080 A(I)=ABS((NO AND 21)>0):NEXTI
1090 NO=0:FORI=8TO7
1100 NO=NO+(A(7-I)>21):NEXTI
1110 POKE(6144+CN*8+J),NO:NEXTJ
1120 GOTO340
1130 POKE36869,192
1140 PRINT"CHOOSE DIRECTION OF DATA TRANSFER"
1150 PRINT"1. STORE TO EDIT BLOCK"
1160 PRINT"2. EDIT BLOCK TO STORE"
1170 PRINT"3. ROM TO EDIT BLOCK"
1180 PRINT"4. CLEAR EDIT BLOCK"
1190 GETI:IF I=" "THEN1190
1200 I=VAL(I):IF I<=0OR I>4THEN1190
1210 IF I=3THEN1290

```

```

10 REM CHAR EDIT A E WEBB 1983
20 PRINT"J":CUR$="*****"
30 OF=33792:FORI=4864TO4885:READX:POKEI,X:NEXT
40 POKE89,8:POKE90,120:POKE91,0:POKE92,20:POKE4865,4:SYS4864
50 TM=PEEK(56):POKE56,56:POKE630,120
60 DEFFNA(X)=4239+(Y-1)*22+X
70 DEFFNB(X)=4896+(Y-1)*22+X
80 PRINT"J CHARACTER EDITOR":POKE36869,192
90 PRINT"J EDIT CHARACTERS"
100 PRINT"X 1. MOVE DATA"
110 PRINT"X 2. KILL PROGRAM WITH"
120 PRINT"X 3. SAVE CHARACTERS"
130 PRINT"X 4. LOAD CHARACTERS"
140 PRINT"X 5. DISPLAY STORE"
150 PRINT"X 6. SELECT OPTION"
160 GETI:IF I=" "THEN170
170 I=VAL(I):IF I<=0OR I>6THEN160
180 ONI0TO190,1130,1530,1590,1590,1620
190 PRINT"J":POKE36869,205:CN=0
200 FORI=128TO191
210 POKE3968+I,1:POKE37768+I,6
220 NEXT
230 PRINT"*****"
240 PRINTTAB(11)"*****"
250 FORI=1TO8
260 PRINTTAB(11)"I"
270 NEXT
280 PRINTTAB(11)"*****"
290 PRINT"***** MACRO ":PRINT"X *****"
300 FORI=1TO5:PRINT" I "
310 PRINT"*****"
320 LI=18:GOSUB1820:PRINT"X"
330 PRINT"COPY EXIT GOTO INVERT MACRO NEXT REFLECT"
340 FORI=8TO7
350 CV=PEEK(6144+CN*8+I)
360 V=I+6:FORJ=7TO8STEP-1
370 X=19-J
380 O=" ":IF(CV AND 21)>0 THENO="*"
390 GOSUB1740:PRINTO
400 NEXT:NEXT:GOSUB1840
410 LI=18:GOSUB1820:PRINT"EDITING CHARACTER#CN=POKE37888+CN,3
420 X=1:Y=1
430 LC=PEEK(FNA(X)):POKEFNA(X),102
440 GETA:IFA=" "THEN440
450 A=ASC(A)

```


VIC-20 PROGRAMMING

```

1200 IFI=4THEN1478
1230 PRINT"J WHICH BLOCK IS BEING MOVED 1-4?"
1240 PRINT"XMM PRESS * TO ABORT"
1250 GETI$:IFI$=""THEN1250
1260 IFI$=="* THEN90
1270 BN=VAL(I$):IFBN<@ORBN>4THEN1250
1280 GOTO1410
1290 PRINT"J WHICH BLOCK IS BEING MOVED 1-8?"
1300 PRINT"M PRESS * TO ABORT"
1310 PRINT"NOTE...."
1320 PRINT"YOU CAN ACCESS ALL 512CHARACTERS IN THE ROM:"
1330 PRINT"BLOCK TYPE" NORMAL"
1340 PRINT"# 1-2 UPPER CASE REVERSED FIELD"
1350 PRINT"# 3-4 UPPER CASE NORMAL"
1360 PRINT"# 5-6 LOWER CASE REVERSE FIELD"
1370 PRINT"# 7-8 LOWER CASE
1380 GETI$:IFI$=""THEN1380
1390 IFI$=="* THEN80
1400 BN=VAL(I$):IFBN<@ORBN>8THEN1380
1410 ONGOTO1420,1430,1440
1420 SA=14336+(BN-1)*512:FA=6144:GOTO1450
1430 SA=14336*(BN-1)+512:S#:=6144
1440 SA=32768*(BN-1)+512:F#:=6144
1450 POKE90,S#/256:POKE89,SA-PEEK(90)*256
1460 POKE92,F#/256:POKE91,FA-PEEK(92)*256:POKE4865,2:SYS4864:GOTO80
1470 PRINT"XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXCLEARING EDIT BLOCK"
1480 FORI=@TO511:POKE(6144+I),0:NEXT
1490 GOTO80
1500 SA=14336:F#:=3120
1510 POKE90,S#/256:POKE89,SA-PEEK(90)*256
1520 POKE92,F#/256:POKE91,FA-PEEK(92)*256:POKE4865,8:SYS4864:RETURN
1530 GosUB1500
1540 POKE641,@:POKE642,28:POKE644,TM:SYS4824 DATE."
1550 PRINT"J SAVE STORE BLOCK FOR EDITING AT A LATER
1560 INPUT"NAME FILE NAME";NA$
1570 S#=56:F#=:GOSUB1890
1580 GOTO80
1590 PRINT"NOTE....."
1600 PRINT"XMM THE NEXT FILE ON THE TAPE WILL BE LOADED."
1610 LOAD"";1:CLR:RUN
1620 PRIN"I":POKE3689,205
1630 SA=14336:F#:=5120
1640 POKE90,S#/256:POKE89,SA-PEEK(90)*256
1650 POKE92,F#/256:POKE91,FA-PEEK(92)*256:POKE4865,8:SYS4864
1660 CH=@:LO=4896:CL=37888:CQ=3:GOSUB1720
1670 CH=64:LO=4142:CL=37934:CQ=0:GOSUB1720
1680 CH=128:LO=4188:CL=37980:CQ=0:GOSUB1720
1690 CH=192:LO=4256:CL=38048:CQ=2:GOSUB1720
1700 GETI$:IFI$=""THEN1700
1710 GOTO40
```

```

1720 FORI=CHTOCH+63
1730 POKELO+I,I:POKECL+I,CO:NEXT:RETURN
1740 POKE781,Y:POKE782,X:POKE783,0:SYS63520:RETURN
1750 BY=0:FORX=1TO8
1760 BI=0:IFPEEK(FNR(X))<32THENBI=1
1770 IFBI=0THENI790
1780 BY=BY+2*(8-X)
1790 NEXT
1800 POKE(6144+CH#8+Y-1),BY
1810 RETURN
1820 POKE781,LI:SYS60045:OOSUB1830:RETURN
1830 POKE781,LI:POKE782,0:POKE783,0:SYS63520:RETURN
1840 PRINT"XXXXXXXXXX"
1850 FORI=0TO7:PRINTTAB(7)"          ":NEXT
1860 PRINT"XXXXXXXXXX"
1870 FORI=0TO7:PRINTTAB(7)PEEK(6144+CH#8+I):NEXT
1880 RETURN
1890 FL=LEN(N#8)
1900 POKE183,FL
1910 FOR I=1TOFL:POKE673+I,ASC(MID$N#8,I,1):NEXT
1920 POKE187,162:POKE188,2
1930 POKE185,1:POKE186,1
1940 POKE193,0:POKE194,5
1950 POKE174,0:POKE175,F
1960 SYS63109:RETURN
1970 DATA162,2,160,0,177,89,145,91,200,206,249
1980 DATA202,240,7,230,90,238,92,76,4,19,96

```

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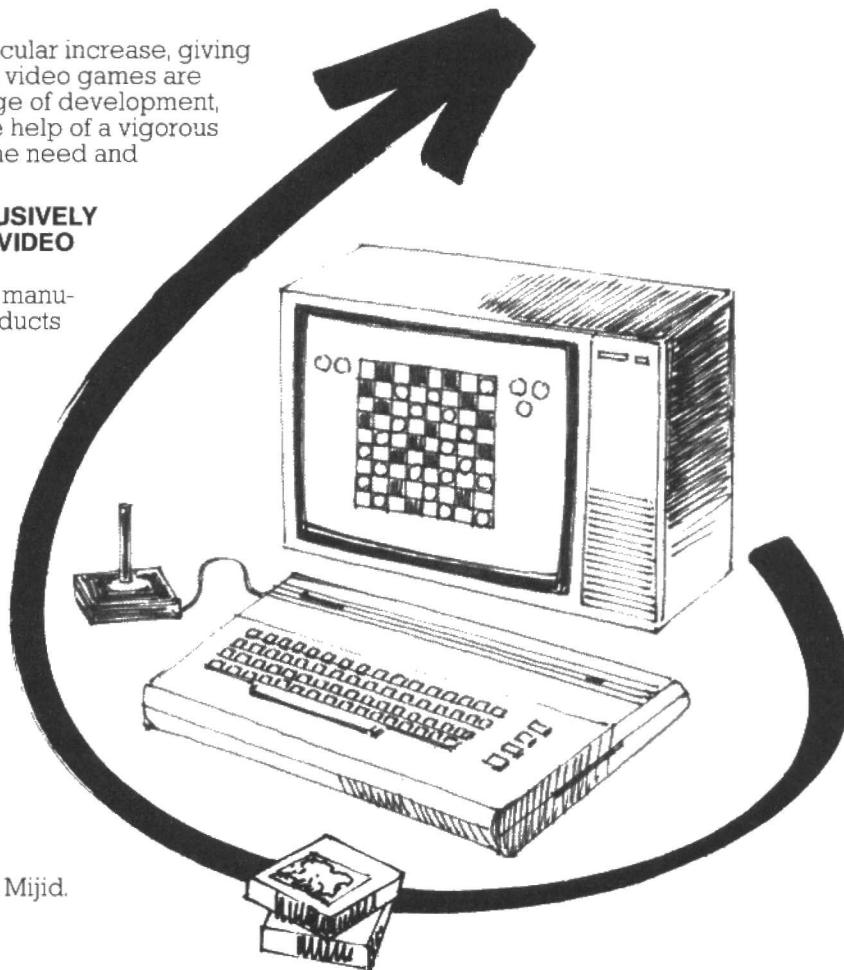
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Messing about on your micro

Want to tamper with the inner workings of your micro? Perhaps one of these programs might be of service.

Ace-Atari Cassette Enhancer Atari 400/800 £7.95

English Software, 50 Newton St, Piccadilly, Manchester

This piece of autoboot machine code is loaded before you start a BASIC programming session on your machine. It has three distinct parts, each encompassing the previous parts.

Firstly, the enhancer allows CSAVE programs to be named, and gives a VERIFY. Second, there is the utility package, giving

RENUMBER, variable DUMP and AUTO line numbering.

Lastly, there is a machine-coder, for those wanting to include machine-code routines in their BASIC. Binary files may be saved and loaded, as well as verified.

All three parts contain useful options, although the machine-coder is perhaps the least useful of the three. Ace loads into 4K if all three parts are selected, and will remain in place until you switch off.

instructions 90%
ease of use 80%
display n/a
value for money 90%



The Visual Processor £5.95

Gilsoft, 30 Hawthorn Road, Barry, S. Glamorgan CF6 8LE

The idea behind the program is good, but the implementation is weak. The action of an imaginary processor is simulated by a BASIC program, with provision for assembly, disassembly, store modification, and even save and load. Since the maximum length of the simulated program is 32 locations, the latter provision seems unnecessary.

Only sixteen instructions are available, the mnemonics being LDA, STA, INA, OUT,

ADD, NEG, LSL, LSR, SBC, ADC, ROL, CMP, JMP, JNZ, JNC and HLT. This offers very limited scope for program construction. As a means of teaching a beginner how to handle machine code, it is like using a kiddie-car to train for world championship motor racing.

To make matters worse, there were inconsistencies in the coding. The user, told to use 'end' to return to the main menu, eventually finds that the required input is 'END'.

instructions 60%
usability 50%
graphics 60%
value for money 15%



Monitor Jupiter Ace £5.95

Jupiter Cantab, Cheshunt Building, Bateman Street, Cambridge CB2 1LZ

A fairly standard utility program featuring the usual machine code facilities, with the useful options of reading the stack and using FORTH words interactively from within the monitor.

A bufferfull of bytes can be poked directly into nominated addresses, but there is no provision for reading the amount of memory left and the monitor will

cheerfully list the contents of non-existent memory addresses — try FFFF!

Hex, octal and decimal bases are available but the main display uses only half the screen and there is no automatic carriage return between successive inputs.

This produces a rather untidy display and provides less information than the Remsoft toolkit with which this monitor will inevitably be compared.

instructions 80%
ease of use 70%
display n/a
value for money 65%



SYS 64 Spectrum £6.95

Artic, 396 James Reckitt Ave., Hull, N Humberside

For anyone familiar with 64-column displays, the 32-column Spectrum format seems rather cramped. Here is a program to solve that. Load it, and half-width characters are printed on a 64-column basis. Even listings appear at 64 characters per line.

There was one slight snag with loading the tape — to be precise, two. First it was found that the 16K and 48K versions were on each other's sides of the

tape, and then it was found that LOAD "" was more successful than the recommended LOAD "" CODE, as it brought the initialising routine into action.

The actual conversion program lies at the top of store, taking up nearly 2K of RAM (F7A9-F7F8 in 48K). It changes the interrupt mode, so that it can poke its nose into the action and perform the necessary conversions.

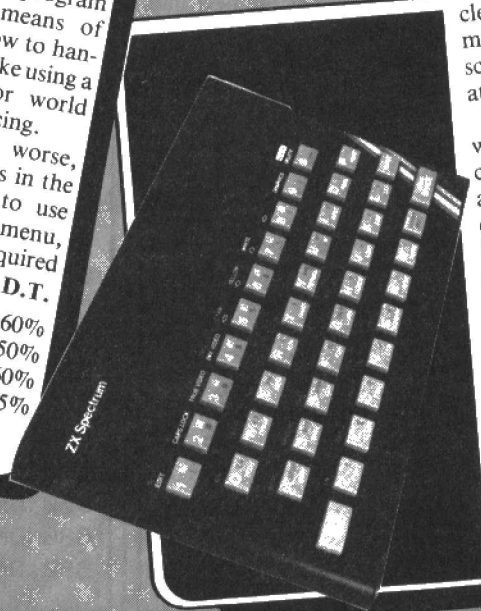
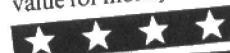
These appear to be the replacement of normal character shapes by half-width versions that are combined in pairs as single characters to be output.

The process is not without its difficulties. Picking up the interrupted for a fresh screen calls for the addition of PAUSE 1 after each

clear screen command. Command lines at the bottom of the screen appear in small characters at normal spacing.

In general, the system works, though the narrow characters are not always as clear as might be wished. It also works on the printer, providing a PRINT action is called before each LPRINT. The character size can be switched from normal size to half size within a given display, and for new BASIC programs it gives useful added flexibility of presentation.

instructions 70%
ease of use 80%
display n/a
value for money 70%



We'll teach you how to draw

Take Peter Shaw's advice and creating drawings will be a lot easier with your Oric. You'll find his sample program has a strangely familiar result

Although the result of this program has only a novelty value, the way in which it its final aim has other uses.

I'm sure most Oric owners have played around with the graphics commands — oval circles, frantically waving lines, the lot!

Armed with a Print 'n' Plotter jotter — they're not totally exclusive to the Spectrum — I first draw my initial design. One good thing about the Print 'n' Plotter jotters is that they are transparent, so you don't have to be an amazing artist. You can trace the design.

Hints on conversion

For computers such as the Spectrum just change CURSET to PLOT, and change every DRAW statement to DRAW D1,D2. Owners of other computers which only have absolute draw will have to re-write most of it, I'm afraid.

If you have looked at the listing, you will have noticed that each letter is treated as a single unit. This has two advantages: first, debugging is a lot easier, and secondly when a letter is used

twice it is a lot easier to just edit the block and get all them looking the same rather than re-writing a new m and getting

Variables

D1 relative draw position (X value)

D2 relative draw position (Y value)

A loop to read information into D1 and D2

something which has no resemblance to the first one.

In every unit (with only a few exceptions) there is a REMark, followed by a CURSET command which fixes the position on the screen where you're going to put the letter, and then a loop which reads data in the part immediately following NEXT A.

The information read into D1 and D2 is the X-Y relative draw positions of the next line. There are places where you can cheat a little, ie the e is a circle with a couple of points unplotted.

With this information in mind, you can now type in the program, change it as you wish, and design your own personalised logo.

```
10 REM Home
20 REM Computing
30 REM Weekly
40 REM P.SHAU 1983
50 PAPER 0:INK 4
60 HIRES:INK 6
70 CURSET 50,45,1
90 REM H
100 FOR A=1 TO 12
110 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
120 NEXT A
```

```
130 DATA 10,0,0,11,6,0,0,-11,10,0
140 DATA 0,31,-10,0,0,-12,-6,0,0,12
150 DATA -10,0,0,-31
160 CURSET 86,67,0
170 REM o
180 CIRCLE 10,1:CIRCLE 4,1
190 REM m
200 CURSET 96,57,0
210 FOR A=1 TO 28
220 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
230 NEXT A
240 DATA 10,0,0,3,1,0,3,-3,4,0,1,1
250 DATA 1,0,3,3,3,-3,1,0,1,-1
260 DATA 3,0,4,4,0,15,-7,0,0,-13
270 DATA -1,-1,-2,0,-1,1,0,13
280 DATA -9,0,0,-13,-1,-1,-2,0,-1,1
290 DATA 0,13,-10,0,0,-19
300 REM e
310 CURSET 143,67,0
320 CIRCLE 10,1:CURSET 151,69,0:CURSET 151,70,0
330 CURSET 151,68,0
340 FOR A=1 TO 8
350 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
360 NEXT A
370 DATA -12,0,0,1,2,2,1,0,1,1,5,0
380 DATA 1,-1,1,0
390 CURSET 146,64,1
400 FOR A=1 TO 5
410 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
420 NEXT A
430 DATA -7,0,0,-1,2,-2,3,0,2,2
440 REM c
450 CURSET 49,76,1
460 FOR A=1 TO 33
470 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
480 NEXT A
490 DATA -4,-5,-1,0,-1,-1,-1,0,-1,-1
500 DATA -9,0,-1,1,-1,0,-1,1,-1,0
510 DATA -4,5,-3,6,0,10,2,4,3,3,5,3
520 DATA 1,1,9,0,4,-2,2,-2,1,0,1,-1
530 DATA -7,-7,-3,0,-1,1,-6,0,-1,-1
540 DATA -1,-1,0,-6,2,-2,6,0,3,2,7,-7
550 REM o
560 CURSET 60,94,0
580 CIRCLE 10,1:CIRCLE 4,1
590 REM m
600 CURSET 70,84,0
610 FOR A=1 TO 28
620 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
630 NEXT A
640 DATA 10,0,0,3,1,0,3,-3,4,0,1,1
650 DATA 1,0,3,3,3,-3,1,0,1,-1
660 DATA 3,0,4,4,0,15,-7,0,0,-13
670 DATA -1,-1,-2,0,-1,1,0,13
680 DATA -9,0,0,-13,-1,-1,-2,0,-1,1
690 DATA 0,13,-10,0,0,-19
```


ORIC-1 PROGRAMMING

```

700 REM P
710 CURSET 107,8,1
720 FOR A=1 TO 20
730 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
740 NEXT A
750 DATA 10,0,0,2,1,0,1,-1,2,-1,4,0
760 DATA 1,1,1,0,4,5,1,1,0,6,-1,2
770 DATA -3,3,-1,0,-1,1,-7,0,-2-2
780 DATA 0,8,-10,0,0,-25
790 CURSET 122,94,0:CIRCLE 4,1
800 REM u
810 CURSET 134,84,1
820 FOR A=1 TO 16
830 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
840 NEXT A
850 DATA 8,0,0,13,1,1,2,0,1,-1,0,-13
860 DATA 9,0,0,18,-9,0,0,-2,-1,0
870 DATA -2,2,-4,0,-3,-1,-2,-2,0,-14
880 REM t
890 CURSET 157,84,1
900 FOR A=1 TO 17
910 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
920 NEXT A
930 DATA 10,-10,0,10,4,0,0,4,-4,0
940 DATA 0,8,1,1,1,0,1,-1,1,0,0,5
950 DATA -2,2,-8,0,-3,-5,0,-9,-1,0
960 DATA 0,-4
970 REM i
980 CURSET 173,84,1
990 FOR A=1 TO 4
1000 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1010 NEXT A
1020 DATA 9,0,0,19,-9,0,0,-19
1030 CURSET 178,88,0:CIRCLE 4,1
1040 REM n
1050 CURSET 184,84,1
1060 FOR A=1 TO 14
1070 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1080 NEXT A
1090 DATA 9,0,0,2,3,-2,4,0,3,2,1,1
1100 DATA 0,16,-8,0,0,-13,-1,-1,-2,2
1110 DATA 0,12,-9,0,0,-17
1120 REM g
1130 CURSET 214,84,1
1140 FOR A=1 TO 21
1150 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1160 NEXT A
1170 DATA 15,0,0,18,-1,2,-1,1,-8,4
1180 DATA -9,0,-4,-2
1190 DATA 0,-8,6,4,3,0,4,-3,0,-4
1200 DATA -3,3,-7,0,-3,-3,0,-7,1,-1
1210 DATA 0,-1,3,-3,1,0,5,0
1220 CURSET 215,89,1
1230 FOR A=1 TO 6
1240 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1250 NEXT A
1260 DATA 4,0,0,4,-5,0,-1,-1,0,-1
1270 DATA 2,-2
1280 REM W

```

```

1290 CURSET 120,106,1
1300 FOR A=1 TO 14
1310 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1320 NEXT A
1330 DATA 4,0,3,9,3,-9,3,0,3,9,3,-9
1340 DATA 4,0,-5,15,-4,0,-2,-6,-1,0
1350 DATA -1,6,-4,0,-6,-15
1360 REM E
1370 CURSET 144,106,1
1380 FOR A=1 TO 12
1390 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1400 NEXT A
1410 DATA 10,0,0,3,-7,0,0,3,7,0,0,3
1420 DATA -7,0,0,3,7,0,0,3,-10,0,0,-15
1430 REM E
1440 CURSET 156,106,1
1450 FOR A=1 TO 12
1460 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1470 NEXT A
1480 DATA 10,0,0,3,-7,0,0,3,7,0,0,3
1490 DATA -7,0,0,3,7,0,0,3,-10,0,0,-15
1500 REM K
1510 CURSET 168,106,1
1520 FOR A=1 TO 20
1530 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1540 NEXT A
1550 DATA 5,0,0,4,2,0,2,-2,0,-2,5,0
1560 DATA 0,4,-1,2,-2,2,2,0,1,1,1
1570 DATA 0,3,-5,0,0,-2,-3,-2,-1,0
1580 DATA 0,4,-5,0,0,-15
1590 REM L
1600 CURSET 183,106,1
1610 FOR A=1 TO 6
1620 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1630 NEXT A
1640 DATA 4,0,0,11,5,0,0,4,-9,0,0,-15
1650 REM Y
1660 CURSET 190,106,1
1670 FOR A=1 TO 9
1680 READ D1,D2:DRAW D1,D2,1
1690 NEXT A
1700 DATA 4,0,3,3,-3,4,0,-4,8,0,7
1710 DATA -5,0,0,-7,-5,-8
1715 GOTO 1800
1720 MUSIC1,RND(1)*3+2,INT(RND(1)*10)+1,
0:PLAY1,0,1,RND(1)*999
1723 FORA=1TO7
1730 INK A
1740 WAIT 10
1750 NEXT A
1760 GOTO 1720
1800 LET X$=" Best for software - ever
y week "
1810 FR A=1 TO 37
1820 CURSET 6+(6*A),150,0
1830 CHAR (ASC(MID$(X$,A,1))),0,1
1840 NEXT A
1845 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT
1850 GOTO 1720

```


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Ultimate, The Green, Ashby de la Zouch, Leics LE6 5JU

Psst is a manoeuvring and shooting game set in the back garden...well, Robbie the robot's back garden!

An exotic flower is growing, guarded by Robbie, but a number of nasty bugs are set on eating Robbie's flower. Each type of bug requires a different type of spray to destroy it.

The flower will bloom if bugs can be kept away from it. When it does, you move on to the

next level, where there are more and different forms of nasties.

Compost bags, fly swatters and watering cans will increase your score if you pick them up.

Graphics are smooth-moving and colourful and the sound effects are tuneful rather than noisy. You can use keyboard or Kempston joysticks.

Definitely an addictive game.

P.F.

instructions	90%
playability	90%
graphics	90%
value for money	90%



Robon £5.95

Softtek, 329 Croxted Road, London SE24

The blurb with this program tells me that it's closely modelled on Berserk, so at least you know what you're getting.

For the uninitiated, the game is based on a series of mazes, made up with electrified fences. Touch one and...ZAP! You are pursued by a number of Robons, who not only must avoid the fence, but also your Laz-Gun.

If they catch you their touch is deadly. Dodging and weaving is a highly recommended way of increasing your chances, but beware! The Rabok is waiting to

appear if you hang around too long and then...KAPOW! Another life bites the dust. Further mazes follow for the skillful.

Rather superior graphics mark this game out, as does the quality of the sound.

One other feature of note is the facility to change the speed. You may not think it all that important, yet it adds substantially to the value of the game.

D.M.

instructions	95%
playability	95%
graphics	95%
value for money	95%



Megapede £5.95

Softtek, 329 Croxted Road, London SE24

Based on the caterpillar idea, the Megapede weaves its way towards you through the mushrooms.

At various points, the tension is heightened by the appearance of the deadly Sid the Spider, and Scorpi the scorpion who drops deadly fleas.

The game itself is an all-colour, all-action affair with sound. The graphics are well done but not animated in the strict sense of the word — they

tend to scroll around the screen instead.

The scrolling is, however, so smooth that you have to look hard to realise what's happening. The sound too could be improved, but I suspect that both of these factors are related to cramming the code into the smaller of the two Spectrums. There is a limit to what can be done in 9½K.

D.M.

instructions	90%
playability	90%
graphics	60%
value for money	80%



Fighting fit with your Spectrum

Look out... the aliens are on the warpath in these new Spectrum games

3D-Combat Zone 48K £5.95

Artic, 396 James Reckitt Ave., Hull, N. Humberside HU8 0JA

Don't consider Lacentra for your holidays this year! The place has been devastated by a hundred years of war and is now a radioactive wasteland. This hasn't stopped Artic from basing this 3D tank battle game there all the same.

You must fight a lone battle against tanks and flying saucers (won't it be boring if outer space really turns out to be a friendly and hospitable place?) Your only weapon is a shell-blaster, and once fired, this takes time to reload. As the struggle progresses,

so your foe sets stronger forces against you.

The 3D effect is interestingly used to make objects loom large as you draw near or shrink as you beat a retreat. Long range shooting usually results in your target tantalisingly moving out of the way at the last moment. Likewise you must avoid the fire of the enemy.

I played the game using the keyboard and found no problems with what is a fairly easy paced game, but Sinclair or Kempston joysticks can be used.

D.J.

instructions	75%
playability	65%
graphics	70%
value for money	70%



Cosmic Debris 48K £4.95

Artic, 396 James Reckitt Ave, Hull, N Humberside HU8 0JA

Goodness knows how but you have managed once again, despite being an ace star-ship commander, to wander into an asteroid belt. To survive there you must blast the asteroids to powder while at the same time fighting off a posse of alien space ships.

Artic describe the two speeds as fast and suicidal, which is a fair description. Very agile

fingers are needed to accumulate a good score. Other features are a choice of one or two player games and a high score record.

Debris is a very fast-moving game and was quite a challenge to play, at first anyway.

D.J.

instructions	75%
playability	65%
graphics	70%
value for money	65%



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"If more programs shared the quality of OMNICALC, then we might see more Spectrums in offices." Home Computing Weekly 3/5/83

"It is ideal for someone who has just found the spreadsheet concept, but it is also a very powerful tool for anyone who has used one previously."

Sinclair User June 1983

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Catcha Snatcha £5.50

Imagine, Masons Buildings, Exchange St. East, Liverpool. A disappointing game which could have been interesting, if a bit more time had been spent ironing out the bugs.

As a store detective you must patrol the corridors of your store preventing shoplifters from perpetrating their wicked deeds. Your duties also include returning lost property to the lost property office and disposing of the occasional parcel bomb.

Graphics and animation are good, but a bug causes the player to occasionally leave a trail of

debris behind him. This stops the game and requires reloading to continue.

Another fault is that at six o'clock on the store clock the rush hour starts. Then the shoplifters speed up so much that you can only stand and watch as your score falls and falls until the game is over. When a new game begins you are back in the middle of the rush hour again.

M.B.

instructions	70%
playability	30%
graphics	85%
value for money	40%



Playing around with your VIC

Here's a selection of new VIC releases, rated for you by our review panel

Innovative Cassettes 1-3 £5.95 each

Melbourne House, Glebe Cottage, Station Road, Cheddington, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 7NA

Several games on one cassette sounds like good value for money until you take into account other factors — like quality.

These three games compilations are sadly lacking in this respect. Written in BASIC, they are very slow and lacking in detail. Small children — no older than eight — might enjoy the strange sounds and bright col-

ours, but for anyone older, they're a definite no-no.

All the games on the Innovative Cassettes are available in book form, where they are arranged to teach BASIC programming techniques to beginners to computing while entertaining at the same time. Fair enough.

With this in mind, the book is much better value for money than the cassettes.

M.B.

instructions	60%
playability	20%
graphics	20%
value for money	10%



Cosmic Fire Birds 8K or 16K £9.95

Solar Software, 51 Meadowcroft, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 8JP

I suspect that Solar must be suffering from a plague of bad tapes since I had no end of trouble getting this program up and running. Solar were most helpful and supplied a second tape in record time. This tape was no better. As a consequence this review is based on only one test session.

This game is a sort of invader cum galaxian cum phoenix game in which you try to repulse hordes of different alien species. There

are four different types of nasties with differing modes of violence and different point values. You have five initial lives with which to slice up as many of the opposition as possible.

The use of colour and graphics were up to a good standard and the aerobatics of the aliens were quite amazing. The game is of progressive difficulty with each level imposing greater amounts of anguish.

A good but slightly over-priced game.

instructions	85%
playability	85%
graphics	85%
value for money	65%



Cyclons 8K or 16K £9.95

Rabbit Software, 380 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex

Yippee! An invader game with a new scenario. Excuse the outburst but new ideas are a rarity nowadays.

Consider an asteroids-type arrangement in which you and the aliens float about the screen. You attempt to shoot the aliens by firing in any of the eight standard directions. The opposition will either shoot back or try to ram you.

As you kill an alien, it is replaced with a new one. The

numbers increase as you survive. In the higher levels, nasty homing aliens appear and they are tough to deal with.

You can select one of three options. These are fast start (ie skip the easy bit), bouncing bullets and landscape. The last option draws a range of hills along the bottom of the screen. Colliding with this results in death. You can select any of these options in any combination to give the difficulty of your choice.

A.W.

instructions	65%
playability	75%
graphics	85%
value for money	80%



Pakacuda £5.99

Rabbit Software, 380 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex

This is a rather jolly version of Pacman involving the consumption of lots and lots of fish.

Not only fish, but eel-type things as well. It doesn't tell you in the instructions, but somehow you will probably work out that eating the eels causes the hunters — some unsavoury octopi — to become hunted (ie eaten).

Joystick only, which I think is a bit of a shame. Not that I dislike waggling a joystick, you understood, but keyboard control allows finer movement...

If you are looking for a Pac-

man look-alike, this one is about average. If you really sweat at the thought of fish, look no further.

T.D.

instructions	45%
playability	70%
graphics	75%
value for money	65%



Brain trainers for your ZX micro

Practice makes perfect in learning any subject and if practice is what you need, a micro is the ideal way to get it. It never gets tired or bored or loses its temper, and it's fun to use as well.

My first program is designed to ask questions on any subject or topic. At the moment it's set up for general knowledge, but you can change the questions simply by changing lines 200 to 780.

The format is easy: the first line asks the questions, the second stores the correct answer in Q\$, and the third line RETURNS to the main loop.

I've written the program to choose 10 random questions from a possible 20, ensuring that there is no repetition per run.

How it works

50-93 asks which type of sum is required, difficulty level and speed (length of time for answering). These are stored in WS, A and D respectively.

97-110 set variables according to levels inputted. X and Y become limits for random numbers.

120 sets up loop J to give 10 questions.

130-140 get two random numbers (A and B) to limits of X and Y.

150-170 check for valid sums, depending on type, to give positive integer answers.

180 puts sum into a string (S\$).

200-210 print the sum.

220-290 empty A\$, set up loop I to time specified by input D. get input by INKEY\$ (stored in GS). If key D is pressed, then delete last character (number) entered. Spectrum version should also include OR GS="d" THEN... Checks valid key, if OK adds it to A\$ and prints it.

300 stores the value of the correct answer as a string in Q\$ ready for checking.

310 calls checking subroutine.

320 goes back for next sum if less than 10.

330 calls end routine, but at 3500 first to modify display.

9500- print additional information before jumping to standard routine at 9110.

```

197 REM * QUESTIONS/ANSWERS *
198 REM *****
200 PRINT "WHAT IS THE CAPITAL
OF ENGLAND ?"
210 LET Q$="LONDON"
220 RETURN
230 PRINT "IN WHICH COUNTY IS B
RISTOL ?"
240 LET Q$="AVON"
250 RETURN
260 PRINT "NAME THE RIVER WHICH
FLAWS THROUGH LONDON"
270 LET Q$="THAMES"
280 RETURN
290 PRINT "WHEN WAS THE BATTLE
OF HASTINGS?"
300 LET Q$="1066"
310 RETURN
320 PRINT "WHICH TREE PRODUCES
ACORNS ?"
330 LET Q$="OAK"
340 RETURN
350 PRINT "WHAT IS THE STREET I
N WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER LIVES
?"
360 LET Q$="DOWNING"
370 RETURN
380 PRINT "HOW MANY IS A DOZEN
?"
390 LET Q$="12"
400 RETURN
410 PRINT "WHAT COUNTRY IS AMST
ERDAM THE CAPITAL OF ?"
420 LET Q$="HOLLAND"
430 RETURN
440 PRINT "WHAT IS THE CAPITAL
OF FRANCE ?"
450 LET Q$="PARIS"
460 RETURN
470 PRINT "NAME THE FAMOUS BRIT
ISH PLANE OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAI
N"
480 LET Q$="SPITFIRE"
490 RETURN
500 PRINT "WHO IS REMEMBERED ON
NOVEMBER 5?"
510 LET Q$="GUY FAWKES"
520 RETURN
530 PRINT "WHICH SPORT IS ASSOC
IATED WITH WALES ?"
540 LET Q$="RUGBY"
550 RETURN
560 PRINT "WHICH BIRD IS ASSOCI
ATED WITH SPRINGTIME ?"
570 LET Q$="CUCKOO"
580 RETURN
590 PRINT "HOW MANY IS A SCORE
?"
600 LET Q$="20"
610 RETURN
620 PRINT "WHERE IS MOUNT SNOWD
ON FOUND ?"
630 LET Q$="WALES"
640 RETURN
650 PRINT "HOW MANY IS A GROSS
?"

```

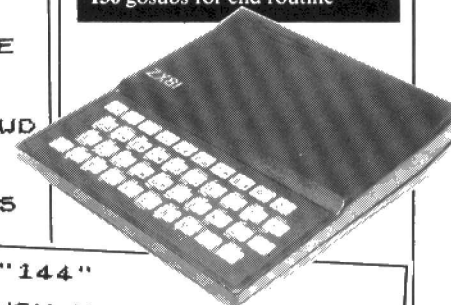
Whether you teach others or teach yourself, you'll want to use Ray Elder's programs for the ZX81 and Spectrum. Type them in to test general knowledge — and sharpen up mental arithmetic

My second program gives drill-type practice on the four rules of number.

How it works

50 sets up C\$ to 20 spaces
60-90 clear screen, select a random number, check it has not been asked before (line 80), and set C\$ to X as a flag that the question has been used.

100 sets the PRINT position
110 gosubs for question
120 gets answer in A\$
130 gosubs checking routine
140 checks for 10 questions asked. If not, go round again
150 gosubs for end routine



```

50 DIM C$(20)
60 CLS
70 LET R=INT (RND*20+1)
80 IF C$(R)="X" THEN GOTO 70
90 LET C$(R)="X"
100 PRINT AT 5,0;
110 GOSUB 170+R*30
120 INPUT A$
130 GOSUB 9000
140 IF G<10 THEN GOTO 60
150 GOSUB 9100
160 GOTO 50
196 REM *****

```

```

660 LET Q$="144"
670 RETURN
680 PRINT "HOW MANY WIVES DID
KING HENRY VIII HAVE
?"
690 LET Q$="6"
700 RETURN
710 PRINT "WHO LED THE ROUNDHEA
DS ?"
720 LET Q$="OLIVER CROMWELL"
730 RETURN
740 PRINT "WHAT DOES H.M.S.O. S
TAND FOR ?"
750 LET Q$="HER MAJESTIES STATI
ONARY OFFICE"
760 RETURN
770 PRINT "WHO GOT THE TEN COMM
ANDMENTS ?"
780 LET Q$="MOSES"
790 RETURN

```


Top Ten programs for the Dragon-32

1	The King	Microdeal (1)
2	Talking Android Attack	Microdeal (-)
3	Nightflite	Salamander (-)
4	Dragon Trek	Wintersoft (-)
5	Space Wars	Microdeal (3)
6	Graphics System	Salamander (-)
7	Katerpillar Attack	Microdeal (6)
8	Chess	Dragon (7)
9	Mined Out	Quicksilva (-)
10	Typing Tutor	Dragon (-)

Compiled by Boots. Figures in brackets are last week's positions

Top Ten programs for the ZX81

1	Flight Simulation	Psion
2	Football Manager	Addictive
3	Fantasy Games	Sinclair
4	1K Games	Sinclair
5	Defender	Quicksilva
6	Chess	Sinclair
7	Asteroids	Quicksilva
8	Scramble	Quicksilva
9	Space Raiders	Sinclair
10	Ship of Doom	Sinclair

Compiled by Boots. Figures in brackets are last week's positions

Top Ten programs for the VIC-20

1	Arcadia	Imagine (2)
2	Wacky Waiters	Imagine (4)
3	Catcha Snatcha	Imagine (5)
4	Asteroids	Bug Byte (7)
5	Panic	Bug Byte (1)
6	Cosmiads	Bug Byte (3)
7	Kaktus	Audiogenic (-)
8	Hoppitt	Commodore (-)
9	Mangrove	Audiogenic (-)
10	Amok	Audiogenic (6)

Compiled by Boots. Figures in brackets are last week's positions

Top Twenty programs for the Spectrum

1	Penetrator	Melbourne House (1)
2	Flight Simulation	Psion (2)
3	Jet Pac	Ultimate (3)
4	Transylvanian Tower	Richard Shepherd (4)
5	The Hobbit	Psion/M. House (5)
6	3D Tanx	dk'tronics (6)
7	Ah Diddums	Imagine (7)
8	Horace Goes Skiing	Psion/M. House (7)
9	Hungry Horace	Psion/M. House (9)
10	Chess	Psion (10)
11	Planetoids	Psion (11)
12	Test Match	Computer Rentals (12)
13	3D Tunnel	New Generation (13)
14	Ground Attack	Silversoft (14)
15	Time Gate	Quicksilva (15)
16	Orbiter	Silversoft (16)
17	Arcadia	Imagine (17)
18	Starship Enterprise	Silversoft (18)
19	Horace and the Spiders	Psion/M. House (-)
20	Pssst	Ultimate (20)

Compiled by W. H. Smith. Figures in brackets are last week's positions

U.S. SCENE

Whiz Kids show to go ahead

A few weeks ago I mentioned that a pilot film had been produced, called Whiz Kids, which was to be the possible forerunner of a TV series of the same name.

Well, it turns out that CBS (a major American commercial network) is planning to make a series out of the idea, regardless of how well the pilot show does. This is very unusual, as networks typically wait for the poll results before committing themselves to such a financial burden.

Apparently preliminary testing has resulted in a favourable response to the pilot, and anyway CBS want to be the first network out with an action show in which the personal computer features heavily.

As I also mentioned in the previous column, the show will feature kids fighting crime with the use of computers, and will show technology (according to the producer) realistically but slightly ahead of state of the art.

That will be interesting all in itself. With giant strides being made so rapidly, slightly ahead when the series is shot may be slightly behind when it is finally shown. I shall let you know how it all turns out come September.

Coleco, the American video game company, stole the show at the recent Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. Their new home computer, the Adam, includes 80K of RAM, tape drive, a word processor in ROM, and a letter quality printer, all for under \$600!

As anticipated, the computer is designed to be an extension of the already available Coleco video game player, and all software and games are compatible between game player and computer. Present owners of the game player can update for about \$400.

The Adam uses a Z80 which addresses 64K, and a TI device that is designed to drive the 16K RAM devoted to screen graphics. The printer and the keyboard each have their own processor chips too.

Rather than go head to head with other small computers, Coleco has concentrated more on the software end. Contrasting with other computers of similar price which come up in BASIC, when a user powers up the Adam, the resident word processor called Smart Writer comes up.

This program allows a 78 column display, and functions very closely resembling those available on a conventional typewriter.

A 64K expansion module is also planned. The company says this will allow versions of, say Donkey Kong, with more features than the arcade version with excellent graphics.

Adam will get plenty of software from a type of cassette called digital data packs. This looks like a conventional cassette machine, but stores data digitally rather than by analog methods. According to Coleco, this allows for a data transfer rate rivalling the floppy disc. Each pack could store as much as 500K, which translates to about 250 text pages.

Interestingly enough, the Adam will come with a version of BASIC on data pack that will be source compatible with Applesoft. Since more Apples are used in schools than any other single brand of computer here, Coleco's thoughts run along the lines that Johnny and Mary can write programs at school on the Apple, and bring them home to run on the Coleco. Sort of like getting a less than half price Apple.

Regarding the letter quality printer, it uses a standard daisy wheel, and will be able to print up to 80 columns. Coleco is claiming 120 words per minute throughput.

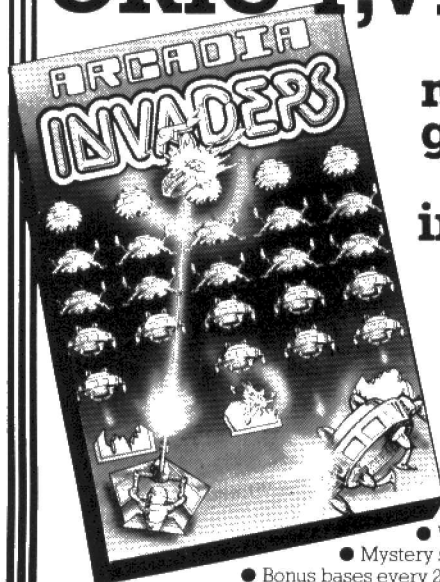
Even with all the hoopla at its so-called debut, company officials did not deny that the exact specs for the machine were still not firm, and that they will be unable to meet demand for some time to come. Still, the machine sounds like it will be capable of doing many things very well for such a low price. I shall look forward to seeing an actual unit.

That's all for this week. See you next time.

Bud Izen

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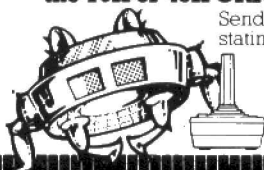
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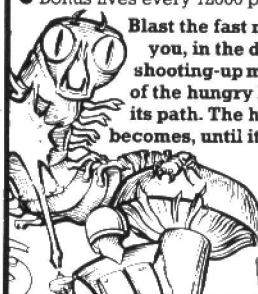
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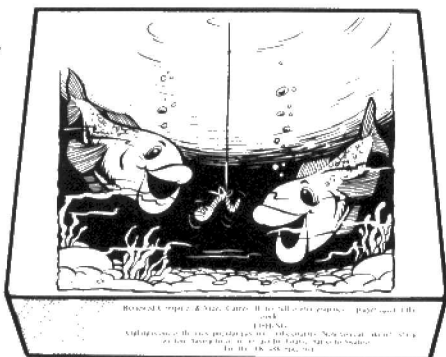


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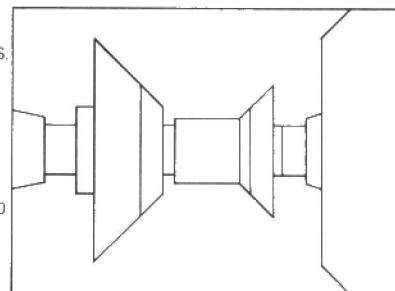
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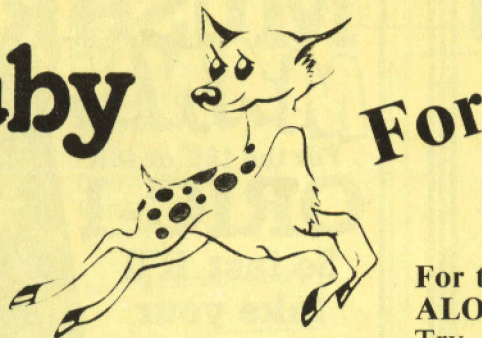


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Activate Neutralise

The gremlins seem to have got at my Atari program, published on p 25 of HCW 15, and taken away line 5020. The missing line is as follows:

```
5020 FOR A=15 TO 0 STEP
-1:SOUND 0,75,10,A:
FOR E=1 TO 5:NEXT E:
SOUND 0,0,0,0:NEXT A
:GOTO 1000
```

David Ryan, Bannbridge, N. Ireland

TI's software shortage

I am writing to congratulate you on the TI-99/4A program published in your March 29-April 4 edition, entitled "Playing around with pixels". I would like you to extend my admiration to the compiler, David Gray.

The expertise, extended conception and imaginative projection shown in the construction of this program are, in my opinion, trulay outstanding. Indeed, my grandchildren use it as a construction game, although I have noticed the elder one (aged 9) making semi-secreteive notes to the hexadecimal codes of her favourite creations. For future reference, I presume.

Now my plea. As you may well know, there is a desperate shortage of cassette software for the TL. Many of the few cassettes offered are repros from Vince Apps book "35 programs for" and with all due respect to Mr Apps, who knows his stuff, the programs in this book are for the struggling novice to insert himself, and therefore more than a little on the simple side.

The TI is being promoted on TV and in the High Street shops at present, and this, coupled with

price reduction and cutting plus the £50 value free offer, is bound to increase the number of TI owners, many, like myself, incapable of originating really first class progs.

There are cartridges of course, but these are too expensive for us low budget enthusiasts to buy and in any case, I feel sure that some of us would welcome progs more mind challenging than Space Invaders or Mazes.

So . . . please . . . could not the talents of the writer of the Pixel prog., or any others with similar capabilities, let us have some interesting stuff for the TI-99/4, this nice little machine that has been so dreadfully neglected by the cassette software producers.

John Woods, Halifax, West Yorks

HCW has now started to publish reviews of some TI software, which we hope will be of use to TI owners.

A satisfied customer . . .

Ever since your first edition people have been writing in to complain about ordering software and hardware by mail order and receiving poor goods and poor service.

Another issue that was discussed in early editions was the forthcoming shakeout in the software market, with predictions that a lot of small firms are going to find it hard and go out of business.

As you may or may not know, nearly all small firms are mail order only operations. All these complaints make the business look untidy and disorganised — this is very damaging, and can scare potential customers away.

I have only seen about two letters of praise for computer firms in your magazine, and the same applies to other magazines — too much complaining and not enough praise.

I have had great service from all mail order firms I have dealt with. I have never had to wait longer than a week for anything I have ordered, and I would particularly like to congratulate Texas Instruments on their service. If you bought a TI-99/4A before 31 January this year you could claim for a £50 rebate. Within two weeks I received a cheque for £50, and I consider this great service.

A. Tanner, Headington, Oxford

. . . But one's not so happy

I recently bought a TI-99/4A and, feeling very proud, sent off for my free offer of the speech synthesizer and games paddles with Basic cartridge and booklet. It was quite a saving on the price for me.

But sad to say, I am still waiting. We did not realise that on some of the computers, the serial numbers have not been stamped in, and the company wouldn't accept the order without a serial number.

After telling Texas Instruments twice and informing the shop, I am still waiting to find out what's happening.

Are the computers really made in Texas? How come only a few slipped through the net?

T. Wilkins, Birmingham

Kirsty Clift of TI said: "Most of the TI-99/4A for the UK market come not from Texas but from Rieti, Italy, and it was a change in the manufacturing process there that caused the trouble."

"The few computers that were sent out without a serial number stamped on did have a sticky label with a date code number, though, and if your computer hasn't got a serial number, the date code number will do just as well for the offer."

"We've had some confusion over our free offers, and I'd just like to make it clear that there are two of them. The first is for free games paddles, a games cartridge and a Basic tutor cassette, and is available if you brought a TI-99/4A between May 3 and July 2."

"The second is for a free speech synthesiser or a free program recorder, and is available for those who bought six TI plug-in games cartridges between April 30 and July 2."

Review it again, T.D.

I'm writing to congratulate T.D. (whoever he may be) on his brilliant write-up of Crazy Climber/Apple Bug in HCW 15. It was witty, informative and very eye-catching.

I only wish more magazines would do it this way. It would make the reviews so much more enjoyable to read.

A. MacDonald, Sudbury, Suffolk

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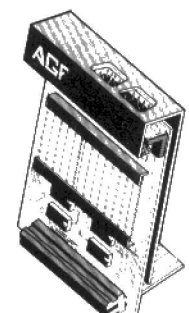
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Best of British programming?

English software is flying the flag in the US-dominated Atari software market. Its boss Phillip Morris talked to Candice Goodwin about his plans not just to compete in the market but to lead it

Considering the number of software companies there are in the UK, it may seem eccentric of Phillip Morris to have called his firm. The English Software Company. But then, you've got to remember that he had the American market in mind.

He said: "Americans are very keen on English people and products. I think it's because of the Royal Family".

English's original logo — a cottage in a rose garden — was designed to have transatlantic appeal. For UK buyers, though, Phillip has dreamed up a more high-tech logo with a video effect. He said: "In this country, cottages are associated with cottage industries — which seems a bit silly since we're in the middle of Manchester".

English is an offshoot of Phillip's shop, Gemini Electronics, and shares the same premises at 50 Newton Street, Piccadilly, Manchester. Gemini sells computer chess games, Atari games machines, Commodore and Atari micros and a range of software.

Gemini itself developed out of an earlier business Phillip had selling computer games machines by mail order — so he's been in the computer games business in one way or another since 1978.

But the idea of selling his own brand of software was sparked off by one of Phillip's customers, Steven Riding. Having bought an Atari micro for Gemini, Steven got interested in machine code programming. The result was Airstrike, a cross between Scramble and Defender.

Steven offered Airstrike to Phillip, who started to sell it by mail order as well as through the shop. But he also had the bright idea of trying to beat the Americans at their own game by selling Airstrike in the US — where the Atari is, of course, a giant seller.

So last summer Phillip's brother Brian set off to seek the company's fortune in sunny California — and that's when the name and logo were originated.

The made-in-England theme extends to Phillip's programming team, which he describes as "the best of British programmers". But finding good programmers has been and continues to be a problem.

The problem is that the Atari uses three separate processors — it has special sound and graphics processors in addition to the main

processing chip. Most home micros only use one all-purpose processor.

So would-be machine code programmers have to understand how the three processors work together, as well as knowing how to make the most of each processor's special abilities.

"You have to learn a lot more about the Atari before you can program it", according to Phillip. "It can take six months to write a program from scratch."

A lot of Phillip's programmers got interested in programming when they bought an Atari from him. He reckons that, although most people initially buy the Atari micro for games, they start programming because of the machine's potential — among other things, it can give you 256 colours on screen at once. But that's not so surprising when you remember that it uses the same chips as the Atari arcade machines.

As well as Airstrike, English Software's range now includes

four more games, on disc as well as cassette, and three utilities. Six more games are scheduled for the end of July, which will be on cartridge as well as cassette.

By the end of the year, Phillip thinks English will be the largest Atari software house in the UK — apart from EMI, that is. He wants to give Atari owners a better deal firstly by informative advertising, with a screen picture and description of every game, and secondly by competitive pricing.

English cassette games cost £15.95 — about a third cheaper than equivalent US products — and in the long term he hopes to bring the price of cartridges down from £30 to around the £20 mark. "Mass production plus new types of chips will mean that cartridges will soon be cheaper to produce", he said.

Phillip also plans to explore the demand for very low-priced games for the Atari later in the year, by offering two or three games for £5 if they are bought

along with a £15 game. But he said he didn't intend to lower his standards.

"Atari owners are very selective in what they buy", he said. "They might buy five games a year, instead of one a week like you would for the Spectrum. But those five games will have lasting appeal." High-quality graphics and an original theme is what he is aiming for in all English's games.

The pick of the English crop will go over to the States to tackle the Atari software market on its home ground. Though the competition over there may be formidable, the potential is enormous, with over half a million Atari machines to cater for.

And when Atari brings out its new machines, which are compatible with the 400 and 800, that potential will increase still further.

Meanwhile, back in the UK, English Software's programs will be appearing on television in the north east this August. Granada TV will be featuring Xenon Raid as the competition game on its Chip-In series.

"The programme is being made in Granada's Liverpool studios", Phillip said, "So we changed the backdrop of Xenon Raid to look like the Liver buildings."

Pointing the way to new trends in Atari software: from left to right, Steve Riding, John Brierley, and Phillip Morris himself



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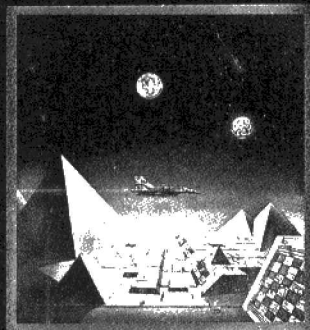
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VIC20 GAMES FROM QUICKSILVA

TORNADO VIC20 GAMES FROM QUICKSILVA



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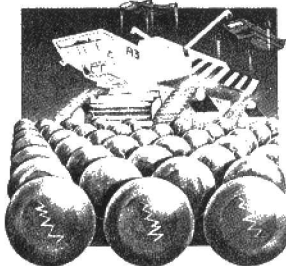
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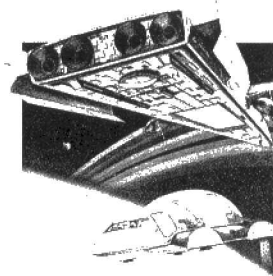
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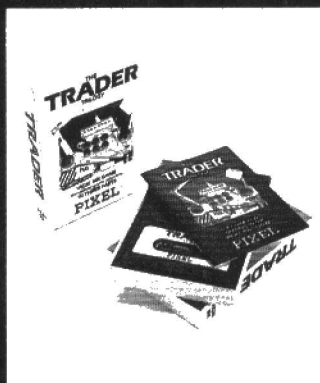
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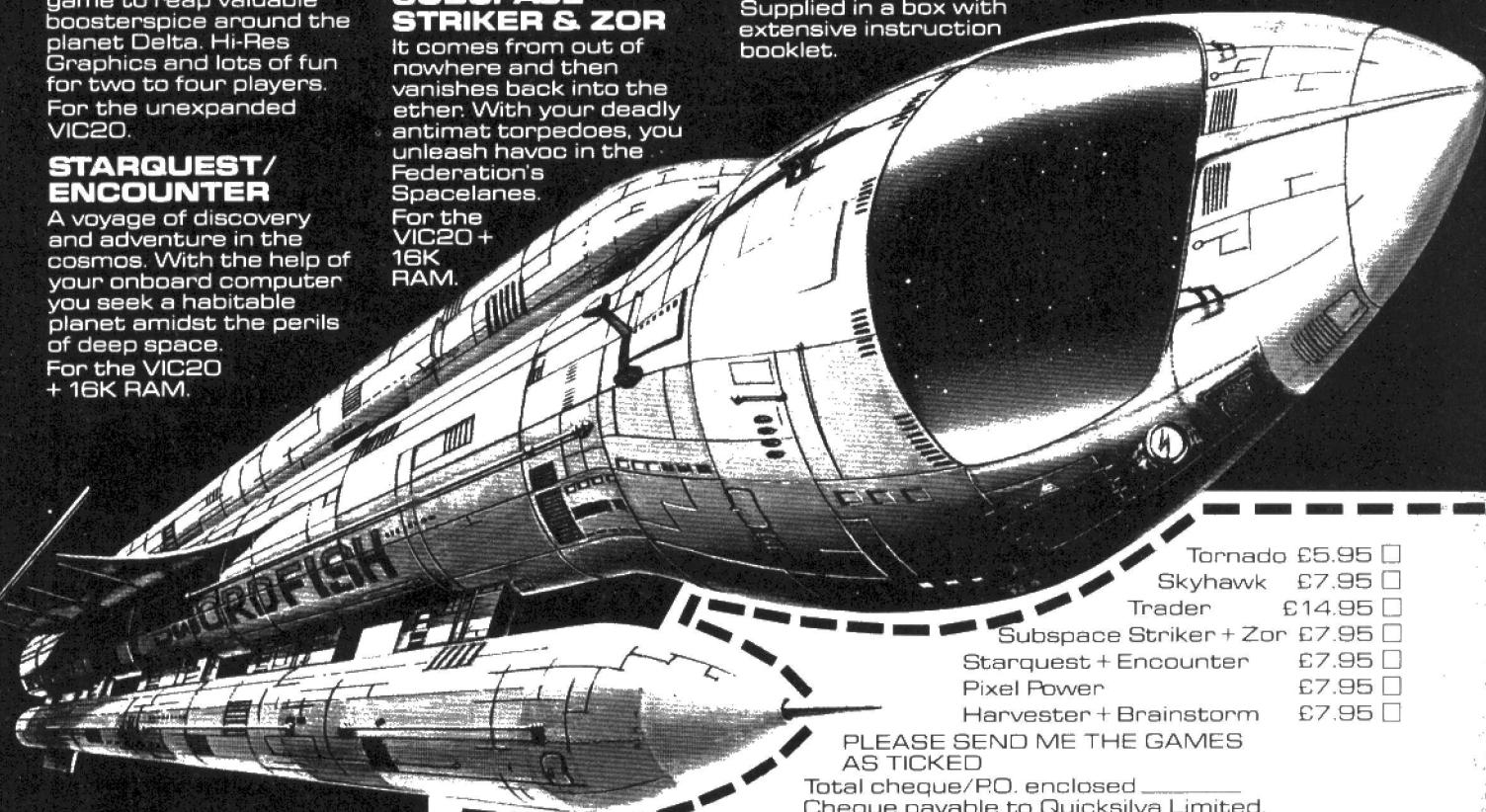


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